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Depression riots and the calling of the 1897 West India Royal Commission

Questions why the West India Royal Commission of 1897 was considered necessary when serious distress already existed in the 1880s. Author argues that riots caught the government's attention much more readily than statistical data. Even minor disturbances could have distracted London from its preoccupation with the newer, more important parts of the Empire.

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DEPRESSION RIOTS AND THE CALLING OF THE 1897  
WEST INDIA ROYAL COMMISSION

Within the vastness of primary archival material that the British generated in describing, measuring, and administering their Caribbean colonies, few documents are so useful as those associated with Royal Commissions of Inquiry. The commissions themselves, of course, were aperiodic, problem-oriented phenomena, and they provided particularly important documentary records of the region in the period immediately prior to and following emancipation. Especially in the mid- to late-nineteenth century in the British Caribbean, when planters and freedmen were coming to grips with new social and economic arrangements in an environment clouded with old animosities, a number of commissions dealt with such issues as sugar cane production, labor immigration, financial issues, and social disturbances (Williams 1970:535-37). Commissioners were usually, though not always, sent from Britain to assess local problems. These problems or issues, further, were usually confined to a particular event, theme, or island, although the commissions on rare occasion were asked to survey the entire region. Since these commissions addressed specific local issues in which points of view conflicted, the records of their findings, spiced with often candid testimonies, provide windows into the region's past.<sup>1</sup>

Royal Commissions of Inquiry also presented metropolitan and, in some ways, cross-cultural perspectives on colonial issues. The heyday of the royal commissions dealing with the British Caribbean coincided with what has been called "The Great Era" of the royal commissions in general, most of which dealt with nineteenth-century social and industrial problems in the British Isles (Clokier and Robinson 1969:54-79). Deriving their formal

authority directly from the Crown, the commissions actually were appointed by ministers whose parties possessed a majority in the House of Commons. The commissions were thus part of, but, at the same time, apart from the formal British political structure because they were charged with assessing specific issues and often granted the latitude to seek answers outside normal government channels. Commissions dealt with problems that often were too immediate, complex, technical, or delicate to be trusted to normal government routine. Their recommendations, though lacking legal authority, usually carried extraordinary weight, and many specific events in British colonial history may be traced to commissions' recommendations. Since Britain's nineteenth-century commissions dealt with both domestic and colonial issues, it was inevitable that commissioners compared social and economic issues across different regions and different cultures. Colonial historians often interpret the calling of a royal commission as a bureaucratic approach to crisis management, and they are familiar with the kind of testimony in commission proceedings whereby a colonial official compares events in, say, British Guiana with those in Ceylon or the Transvaal.

The capstone of the British Caribbean's nineteenth-century era of royal commissions – and a benchmark on which several twentieth-century commissions were based – was the momentous West India Royal Commission of 1897, the first comprehensive, region-wide commission since 1842. Appointed in December, 1896, by the British Colonial Secretary, Joseph Chamberlain, the four-man commission was charged with investigating the local results of the severe economic depression in the late-nineteenth century British Caribbean. The depression had created widespread losses in sugar revenue, thereby leading to the lowering of wages and even the abandonment of some sugar cane estates, all of which created "distress among the labouring populations" and other dire circumstances. The members of the commission conducted background hearings in London during the first week of 1897 and then sailed for the Caribbean from Southampton on January 13. In the next three months the commission visited British Guiana, nearly every British possession in the arc of the Lesser Antilles, and also Jamaica. During these visits they amassed a wealth of written information from local officials and planters, and they also collected remarkably candid testimonial evidence from representatives of local working classes. During their three months in the British Caribbean they held "forty-five formal meetings to collect oral evidence, and examined three hundred and eighty witnesses of all classes and occupations" (*Report* 1897:iii, 1).

It would be difficult to overstate the importance of the 1897 commission for the British West Indian region as a whole. Among its final conclusions, the commission unanimously recommended five remedial measures to

alleviate the distress in the British Caribbean: 1) “the settlement of the labouring population on small plots of land as peasant proprietors”; 2) establishing minor agricultural industries and the improvement of the system of cultivation; 3) improving inter-island communications; 4) encouraging a fruit trade with New York and, eventually, London; and 5) obtaining a loan from the Imperial Exchequer for the establishment of central cane-milling factories in Barbados (*Report* 1897:70). The first of their five recommendations – the one proposing an independent landed peasantry – was by far the most important for the region as a whole because it laid the groundwork for the subsequent breaking up of large estates in several islands. The commission’s recommendations thus marked, in many ways, a socioeconomic watershed for the eastern Caribbean; writing in 1947, a half-century after the commission, C.Y. Shepherd, the Carnegie Professor of Economics at the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture in Trinidad, asserted that “[t]he report of the 1897 Commission may be regarded as the Magna Charta of the West Indian peasant” (Shepherd 1947:63).

Like all of the major Royal Commissions of Enquiry, the 1897 West India commission was called for a number of reasons, and it would be pointless to seek a single cause for it. The formal reason for the commission, “to inquire into the present condition and future prospects of the sugar-growing Colonies of the West Indies, and to suggest such measures,” etc. (*Report* 1897:v) was of course articulated in ponderous Victorian prose as a preamble to the final written report. But terrible, economically depressed conditions already had existed in the region for over a decade. Why, then, did it take so long for an official commission to be formed, and thereby acknowledge fully the serious distress in the British Caribbean in the late-nineteenth century, when officials in the Colonial Office in London for years had daily perused case after case of depression-induced misery sent from the islands? Put another way, if the commission was considered unnecessary in the mid-1880s when the depression became obvious, why was it convened at all?

There is, of course, no simple answer, but it seems more than coincidental that the number of civil disturbances in the region was growing during the depression years, riots and protests that apparently caught London’s attention much more readily than did malnutrition data. And some of the most serious disturbances during the period, major sugar workers’ riots in St. Kitts and British Guiana in 1896, must have gone far in pushing British officials into taking some kind of action. Within the context of London’s overall colonial strategy – by this time being played out on a truly global scale – the West Indian labor riots were minor nuisances. But if these disturbances continued and escalated, they could have distracted the Colonial Office from its preoccupation with the newer, larger, and richer parts of the



empire. It therefore seems more than likely that the riots helped greatly in precipitating the decision to call the 1897 commission. And since the commission itself led to momentous changes in the region, it seems reasonable to suggest that British West Indian working class resistance, in the form of riots and disturbances and within the context of the limits imposed by British colonial policy, helped create major material changes in the region. This suggestion, in turn, is entirely consistent with the general acknowledgement that Caribbean resistance is not simply an academic slogan intended to romanticize the plight of the region's oppressed peoples, but that it has represented, among many other things, a means by which Caribbean peoples have bettered themselves.

#### THE SUGAR BOUNTY DEPRESSION OF THE LATE-NINETEENTH CENTURY

The economic distress in the British Caribbean had not occurred overnight; it was obvious to anyone who cared to notice that, by the late 1800s, the colonies of the British Caribbean were anachronisms of an earlier empire. Slave emancipation in the 1830s, followed by the rescinding of preferential sugar prices on the London market a decade later, had reduced planters' profits. Worse, the relic infrastructures that had evolved under earlier social and economic conditions were still in place in the smaller islands of the British Caribbean in the late nineteenth century. Small-island size, a geographical characteristic that had afforded ready access for all local planters to port facilities in the days of sailing ships, was now a hindrance in light of the availability of huge tracts of virgin tropical soils elsewhere. Active windmills, which still dominated the late nineteenth-century landscapes of some of the "old islands" such as Antigua, St. Kitts, and Barbados were no match for the steam-driven cane factories that had revolutionized cane sugar production in other tropical areas.

It was difficult enough to compete with modern sugar production in Brazil, Natal, Mauritius, Java, and Fiji, but British Caribbean producers needed to look no farther than the Greater Antilles for examples of sugar success that came from combining modern technology and new lands. Correspondence and commentary from the British Caribbean in the late 1800s were filled with references to the ways in which American capital had transformed the Cuban sugar industry. The sophisticated techniques of producing, storing, and shipping Cuban sugar far outpaced the same activities in the British Caribbean (Moreno Fraginals 1985). But comparative production volumes marked the real differences. In 1815 Cuban sugar exports had been only half those of Jamaica; by 1894 Cuba produced fifty times the sugar

cane grown in Jamaica and four times that grown in the combined territories of the British Caribbean (Williams 1970:366-67)!

To be sure, not all techniques or production zones in British Caribbean sugar cane production had remained ossified. Especially in the larger, newer southern colonies of Trinidad and British Guiana, modern milling techniques and vacuum boiling procedures were paired with new lands to produce a higher quantity and quality of raw sugar than in the older, smaller colonies farther north. And it was to these new places and Jamaica that the great majority of indentured laborers taken from India to the British Caribbean had been brought to satisfy late-nineteenth century labor needs. Black workers from Barbados and some of the other small islands to the north also had emigrated to the south – both seasonally and permanently – attracted by higher wages than they could earn by staying at home (Adamson 1972:41-46). But no amount of internal reorientation of the human geography of British Caribbean sugar production could reorient the trajectory of the global economy. British industrial capitalism now created massive manufacturing surpluses that required an open, global market; the economies of the tiny, sheltered Caribbean sugar islands had, very simply, evolved in another era.

It was not, however, competition from other tropical areas that represented the immediate cause of the late-nineteenth century depression in the British Caribbean but agricultural developments in Europe itself. Beet sugar cultivated in Europe and then also in the United States had, since early in the nineteenth century, made steady inroads on global cane sugar production and passed it early in the 1880s (Galloway 1989:132). European beet sugar's success, moreover, recently had been invigorated by political, not necessarily agro-scientific, inputs. Continental European governments had introduced a complex system of payments to their local beet sugar refiners which were refunds of internal excise taxes for exported beet sugar; the refunds were based on conventional sugar extraction standards, so refiners were encouraged to improve their techniques to receive higher refunds ("bounties") for the greatest amount of sugar that could be produced from a given weight of beet (*Report* 1897:139-49). Encouraged to greater production by these incentives, European – mainly German – sugar producers dumped a massive quantity of beet sugar on the open London market early in 1884, driving down sugar's price there from 19 shillings per hundred pounds to 13. Thus began the devastating "bounty depression" in the Commonwealth Caribbean where sugar prices did not reach 1883 levels again until World War I (Deerr 1950, II:531).

British Caribbean planters condemned London's free-trade policies as betrayals to faithful colonial subjects, and they submitted an endless series

of broadsides, petitions, and memoranda that reflected these sentiments that were articulated at planters' meetings in the islands. The pressure to maintain free-trade in the London sugar market, however, was intense and not simply a government capitulation to British industry. British working classes, for example, given lower sugar prices, now enjoyed a higher percentage of sweets and jam – items formerly considered luxuries – in their diets, and the local confectionery trades thereby lobbied effectively for free-trade (Hobsbawm 1968: 162-63). In the Caribbean, planters' already-thin profits were thereby reduced. As the financial outlook in the region darkened, some of the oldest local merchant houses failed, business concerns that traditionally had provided credit to the sugar cane planters and had represented the financial underpinnings for insular sugar cane industries (*Report* 1897:24).

But the truly grim results of the bounty depression were felt most keenly, of course, among the region's working peoples. In the larger territories – Jamaica with bananas, Trinidad with cacao and asphalt, British Guiana with rice and forest industries, Belize with timber – there were alternatives to sugar cane, although all of these territories except Belize also had sizeable populations to sustain, and alternative livelihood pursuits could not absorb the unemployed. The depression conditions hit hardest in the small places most dependent on sugar, such as Antigua, Barbados, St. Kitts, and St. Vincent. From these islands and all of the others came reports by the hundreds in which local administrators seem to have vied with one another to portray their particular islands' conditions in as depressing a manner as possible. Planters had lowered wages everywhere and had reduced sugar cane acreage, providing even less work than usual for the islands' laborers. Villagers' meager savings were dried up almost immediately. Small livestock and fowls were sold back and forth and eaten. Reduced wages meant less cash on hand to buy imported flour and salted fish, so malnutrition was rampant. Disease then became more prevalent than usual. Men sought wage work outside their home villages by going to the capital towns, only to learn that little work was available anywhere on their home island. Inter-island movements to seek wage labor elsewhere, a livelihood strategy that had been carried out since emancipation, also was less effective than usual because the depression conditions affected conventional migration destinations.

It is hardly surprising that individuals among local working peoples grumbled and complained. Their wage labor provided them a bare subsistence in the best of times, and they were fully aware that local planters controlled local resources, thereby inhibiting laborers in many of the islands, for example, from extending subsistence agriculture beyond their tiny garden plots.

Island officials and also those in the London Colonial Office monitored these complaints, bearing in mind that troubles were most likely to emerge where pent-up workforces were hit hardest by depression. In 1886 in Barbados, for instance, Chief Justice Conrad Reeves endorsed a law that provided financial backing for agricultural loans by the island's treasury, citing the necessity for local agricultural wages to offset his worry "that the colony was steadfastly drifting towards a crisis." In considering his request, London officials acknowledged what could happen in Barbados:

We may admit that there is a danger of a good many estates going out of cultivation; and when that happens in Barbados, the too large working population, which in the best times does not get continuous employment even at a very low wage, is reduced to starvation-incendiary fires become numerous, and there is a rising which the troops can with difficulty put down.<sup>2</sup>

Another example, among the dozens involving expected or threatened trouble in the wake of depression-induced misery, came from St. Vincent in 1896, and it provided explicit links between these troubles and land hunger, the issue eventually considered at length by the 1897 commission. A letter from S.L. Thornton, the Attorney General of St. Vincent, summarized the local land situation, discussing specifically the fertile plantation lands on St. Vincent's Windward coast that some local planters had threatened to take out of production owing to low cane prices; even if they planted no cane, the planters planned to continue to prohibit the use of these lands by nearby black villagers. Thornton pointed out that many local laborers had responded by emigrating, and he suggested how better interior roads might improve prospects for subsistence agriculture for black villagers. But London officials took particular note of Thornton's prediction of what probably would occur in the neighborhood if planters let the lands lie fallow. It would lead, according to Thornton, to "disturbances on the part of the unemployed, particularly in the Windward District. There is a police force of about 50 in the Colony, which is not much to be relied on to prevent or suppress disorder."<sup>3</sup>

#### THE VIEW FROM THE COLONIAL OFFICE

It was not as if 1897 was an otherwise uneventful year for Britain and the British Empire. Public celebrations and imperial pageantry associated with Victoria's diamond jubilee accented London's society and decorated its parks and gardens, as well as those throughout Britain. Beyond the British Isles, the expansion of the empire involved thousands of British officials and

soldiers and provided sensational reading for those who had stayed behind. Tensions between the British and Boers in southern Africa were escalating and would explode into an all-out war by 1899. The northwest frontier in India, particularly the unrest among the Pathans, also required the vigilance of the British army. Given these and other preoccupations, it seems extraordinary that in 1897 the Colonial Office would have sponsored a full-blown Royal Commission to deal with the West Indies, a region that the Colonial Secretary Joseph Chamberlain (who had assumed the office in 1895) would describe soon thereafter as the "Empire's darkest slum" (Amery 1951, IV:241-42).

The British overseas preoccupation with Africa and India at the turn of the century, furthermore, had required – according to some interpretations – accommodation and even acquiescence to former rivals in several strategic world areas. Under a growing German naval threat, Britain accepted Japanese preeminence in the northwestern Pacific, established harmonious relations with the French in the Mediterranean, North Africa, and Southeast Asia, and resolved former differences with Russia in the Far East. Britain had also accepted, with reluctance, United States arbitration of the boundary dispute between Venezuela and British Guiana in the 1890s as called for in the Monroe Doctrine. And the Spanish-American War of 1898 combined with the U.S. Panama Canal effort begun six years later established undisputed American preeminence throughout most of the Caribbean (Gilpin 1981:194-97).

Yet Britain still controlled a substantial string of colonial Caribbean territories, and these territories' status and eventual dispositions were among the many issues entertained by Colonial Office officials in the last two decades of the nineteenth century. Unlike in the former "settler colonies" of Canada and Australia, forms of home rule and local political sovereignty for these Caribbean colonies seemed out of the question. The reason seemed remarkably clear; Colonial Office officials held deep reservations about the abilities of Afro-Caribbean peoples to govern themselves and others. A slight exception was a new constitutional change in Jamaica in 1884 which entered "the largely uncharted field between pure crown colony government and representative government." But such a "liberal constitution" was inappropriate for the region as a whole according to Joseph Chamberlain who, in 1896, explained that even minor elements of self-government were "not really suited to a black population" (Will 1970:11, 232). And even the eventual recommendations of the 1897 Royal Commission, sweeping as they were in the area of economic reforms, "fell silent on issues of political change" (Holt 1992:316).

Influences on the thinking of British Colonial Office officials about their

Caribbean colonies in the late-nineteenth century were many and varied, ranging from personal anecdotes to the reading material they encountered in newspapers, magazines, and the written correspondence they received, endorsed, and generated as part of their jobs. Pronouncements and writings from the Fabian Society, founded in the early 1880s, contrasted sharply with the enduring racist dogma of Thomas Carlyle, suddenly half a century old. Colonial Office officials also read widely the newer, contemplative “development” books such as those by writers like Benjamin Kidd who pronounced the demographic urgency of controlling the tropics. European races, according to Kidd, owed it to mankind to unlock the vast resources of the low latitudes that had heretofore been untapped by the indolent “natives” residing there. But this development process would have to be of a remote, indirect kind, lest Europeans, according to Kidd, become victims to the climatically-induced sloth and physical regression characteristic of long-time inhabitants of the tropics (Kidd 1898).

Kidd’s sentiments about European superiority versus the inferiority of tropical peoples were consistent with a heightened racism that accompanied, and in some ways resulted from, contemporary British adventures in Africa. As the British sought to control large numbers of Africans as political subjects and undifferentiated laborers, it became convenient to classify them as “savage” or “primitive.” And it is unsurprising that these pejoratives spilled over into common parlance about the supposed nature of black West Indians, though some Colonial Office officials consciously resisted these comparisons (Olivier 1971:56). They nevertheless persisted, and much of the writings about and correspondence from the British Caribbean at the time offered innumerable comments that the region’s working poor would – without the benign, progressive, and forward-looking guidance of British colonialism – revert to uncivilized “African” forms of human behavior. A guidebook produced in 1893, as only one example among many, predicted the likely result of what would happen if blacks were to take control of Barbados; the island soon would become a settlement of “African hut(s) of wattles and thatch” whose inhabitants “would be found cooking their bananas and yams on the ruins of warehouses” (Stark 1893:195).

These kinds of comparison, moreover, were extended on occasion beyond dark-skinned British subjects to include others oppressed by British imperialism. J. H. Sutton Moxly, the resident chaplain for the British soldiers quartered in Barbados, offered a “scientific” discourse on overall black inferiority in 1886. Consistent with similar racist dogma of the era, Moxly alluded to black mental and moral inferiority as a consequence of the “shape of his head, facial angle, and contour and expression of his features.” But the perceptive Reverend Moxly could see beyond mere physical char-

acteristics when it came to lumping others he disliked into the same despised group as blacks: "Strange as it may seem, there are many points of similarity between the characteristics of the negro and the Irish peasant of the remoter districts of the south and west." And farther on "[...] Quashee, Sambo, and Co. are the [...] Patricks of the torrid zone [...]" (Moxly 1886:140-41, 155, 162). It is difficult to see how these ludicrous comparisons could have been taken seriously by any but a very few, but they were by no means inconsistent with the profoundly distorted image of the Irish peasant made popular by the British press, and doubtless in less formal British parlance, earlier in the nineteenth century (Holt 1992:319).

Although these perverse, mean-spirited comparisons of black Africans and white Irish were probably taken only slightly more seriously late in the 1800s than they would be today, one century later, the indirect influence of the Irish land-use policy on West Indian economic reforms was probably profound. In a recent and illuminating study, Thomas Holt (1992:318-36) points out that the Irish land law of 1870 was the basis for subsequent acts and, more importantly, the establishment of a landed class of smallholders in Ireland; he further suggests that these developments, based in part on Colonial Office perspectives gained from India, influenced similar decisions made in the West Indies and elsewhere and that land reform, without home rule, was a policy embraced by Joseph Chamberlain when he took control of the Colonial Office in 1895.

Holt's suggestions about the overriding influence of Irish developments on Colonial Office thinking about comparable developments elsewhere thus makes sense of the seemingly radical pronouncement by Governor Walter Sendall of the British Windwards in November, 1886, in the aftermath of a minor hurricane that had hit St. Vincent three months earlier. Sendall's comment, echoing a number of cautious yet similar remarks from British Caribbean officials in the 1880s, was an early warning signal as to what the 1897 commissioners, whose perspectives also were influenced by events in Ireland and elsewhere, eventually would recommend. Sendall saw St. Vincent's future lying squarely on "the creation of a class of peasant cultivators" who would realize success by exploiting "that boundless fertile capacity which is inherent in the soil, but which has hitherto been confined within the narrow limits of one or two staple commodities."<sup>4</sup>

Perhaps the single most influential traveler/writer dealing with the British Caribbean during the bounty depression was James Anthony Froude, the Regius Professor of Modern History at Oxford University and, perhaps more important, Joseph Chamberlain's occasional dinner companion. Froude toured the region in 1886-87 with an eye to assessing the possibility of some sort of parliamentary self-rule for the islands which had become "a

burden upon our resources" and which "were no longer of value to us." Froude's travelogue-like narrative of his experiences was sprinkled with gratuitous asides, often cited approvingly by Colonial Office officials, that reinforced the notion that black West Indians were essentially African savages who would backslide irrevocably into primitive ways without (white) Britain's guidance. The dark peoples of the islands, according to Froude, never had "shaken off the old traditions" and if they ever came to control the region "the state of Hayti stands as a ghastly example of the condition into which they will then inevitably fall [...]" (1888: 4-6, 258).

Froude had contemporary detractors, although apparently none dissuaded Colonial Office thinking from his point of view. John Jacob Thomas, the self-taught Trinidadian schoolteacher, provided a sharp-edged grassroots critique of Froude's haughty racism and smug, self-fulfilling generalizations in his book *Froudacity* that was published in London one year after Froude's volume had appeared (Thomas 1889). Although Thomas's book has become praised in retrospect, it is likely that in the late-nineteenth century Colonial Office readers in London took more seriously the anti-Froude writings of C.S. Salmon, himself an official in the Colonial Office who had held posts in West Africa, Seychelles, and the Caribbean itself. Salmon's monograph entitled *The Caribbean Confederation* (1888) at times presented a scathing, insightful, and line-by-line repudiation of both the substance and analysis of Froude's writings. Salmon also presented, not incidentally, a blueprint for the eventual yet short-lived political union among British West Indian colonies that seventy years later would mark their freedom from colonial political rule.

### THE DEPRESSION RIOTS

Froude's relentless reminders about "Hayti" and its associated evils doubtless were more meaningful to West Indian planters domiciled in the islands than they were to London. The sugar bounty depression, after all, had begun a mere half-century after British slave emancipation, and stories about the horror of Haiti, memories of the bloody "Christmas Rising" that had preceded emancipation in Jamaica, and a general, underlying fear that white planters had of their black workforces all were still alive. Black slaves' potential for riot, rebellion, incendiarism, and murder was, of course, as old as the region's plantation system itself, and every British Caribbean possession had nurtured Maroon societies of varying size and tenacity (e.g., Craton 1982). And the official discussions prior to emancipation, while focused on labor availability and other economic issues, also had touched



on the troubling possibility that freedmen, without the legal sanctions of slavery, would turn violently on their former masters in bloody reprisal.

It is therefore not surprising that civil disorders of any kind – trespass, jailbreaks, unauthorized strikes, and even grumbling or muted threats – among black workforces in the islands were accorded special apprehension in the decades after slavery, lest they escalate into islandwide conflagrations. And though these Caribbean disturbances were of tiny moment in London's eyes compared with, for example, the 1857 Sepoy Mutiny in India, they occurred sufficiently often to make local administrators wary and even helped shape local policies. In March, 1849, for example, riots were focused on high land rents combined with low prices paid for cultivators' vegetables in Castries, St. Lucia, disturbances that spread into the island's mountain villages, leaving eight persons dead and the Castries jail full (Louis 1982: Chapter 3). Forty years later, in October, 1890, St. Lucian administrators, in attempting to solve the island's financial dilemma, decided not to impose an islandwide land tax on smallholders, citing the 1849 disturbances as an earlier response to government insensitivity.<sup>5</sup>

In the decades prior to the sugar bounty depression, other British West Indian riots similarly shaped Colonial Office policy in the region. Colonial Office sentiment and local planters' viewpoints sometimes collided on important issues; London may be said to have protected freedmen in the post-slavery years, for example, from stringent vagrancy laws that inhibited black workers' mobility from one estate to another or to nearby islands to seek higher wages. But the imposition of Crown Colony government in Jamaica and then elsewhere in the region came after the Morant Bay rebellion in Jamaica in 1865 in which several white landholders were killed. This direct government by the crown, further, has been interpreted "as a means of protecting the interests of European planterdom" (Green 1976:353). In an even broader sense, Morant Bay "was taken afterwards as an explicit demonstration of the failure of British emancipation policy and as evidence of the ex-slaves' incapacity for responsible citizenship" (Holt 1992:307).

The so-called Confederation Riots in Barbados in April, 1876, resulted in eight shooting deaths and the jailing of four hundred who had taken part in disturbances on the island. The issues surrounding the riots were varied, complex, and probably related more to local conditions than anything else. But the oversimplified interpretation provided to the alarmed officials at the Colonial Office was that the proposed administrative confederation of Barbados and the Windwards into a single Crown Colony was favored by blacks and opposed by whites. Barbados kept its representative (planter-dominated) constitution, Governor Pope Hennessy – accused by key members of the plantocracy as an instigator for confederation – was reassigned

to Hong Kong, and Barbados' government came under tighter central control through the formation of an executive committee in 1881 to control and augment the planter assembly (Levy 1980:150-55).

Two disturbances in Trinidad early in the 1880s probably were interpreted by London as rooted more in local events and conflicts than symptomatic of a wider economic malaise in the region as a whole. By the 1870s the island's pre-lenten Carnival, originally a celebration by the local white elite, had become more and more a vehicle for ritual display by black urban dwellers. The carnival celebrations thus came to provide an opportunity – on at least one night of the year – for poor blacks to assemble in "Canboulay" torchlight parades and to mock local convention and propriety with bawdy songs and sham stickfighting. In 1881 Captain Baker, Inspector-Commandant of Trinidad's police, attempted to suppress the Canboulay procession in Port of Spain resulting in a disturbance featuring smashed street lamps and 38 injured police. Similar disorders associated with the Canboulay processions in 1883 spilled over into San Fernando and Princes Town and led to legal restrictions against public torch processions and the eventual abolition of Canboulay celebrations (Brereton 1979:169-75).

A related (in the eyes of the colonial government) incident resulted in the shooting of a number of indentured Indians in Trinidad in October, 1884. If the Canboulay processions were to be controlled and suppressed, the Trinidad government felt that Indian celebrations should be similarly restricted. Laws thereby prohibited Indian celebration processions from entering Port of Spain or San Fernando or from proceeding along a public highway. A confrontation then occurred at San Fernando between police and participants in the Shia Muslim celebration of Muharram, an event the police had attempted to control but which, in their view, had turned into a riot. An estimated sixteen Indians were shot dead by the police and scores injured amid this tragic confrontation (Singh 1988).

The first riots in the British Caribbean to occur after the beginning of the sugar bounty depression broke out in a most unlikely place. Grenada was perhaps alone among the British possessions in its economic reliance on cacao and a resulting smallholder prosperity. Discontent nevertheless flared into violence on Guy Fawkes night in St. George's, November 5, 1885, in an episode whose characteristics paralleled closely the Canboulay disturbances of Trinidad earlier in the decade. For years it had been customary for Grenadians to fling pitch-soaked "fireballs" about the market square, a menacing ritual commemorating Guy Fawkes' attempt to demolish the British Parliament buildings. Local Grenadian merchants had persuaded the newly-appointed governor that the dangerous practice should be abolished. Angered by what they considered a rescinding of local rights, a crowd

fought local police (all of whom were imported Barbadians) by throwing rocks and bottles and smashing street lamps and windows as well. Several persons were imprisoned for up to three months. Handwritten broadsides – some confiscated by the police after the riots – had been distributed beforehand to potential rioters; the handbills enumerated grudges and resentments. They also suggested that the Guy Fawkes disturbances were a symptom of growing frustration by an incipient Grenadian middle class against an officious, incompetent ruling elite and hardly indicative of outbursts by a depression-strangled sugar proletariat.<sup>6</sup>

Much more ominous were the troubles six years later in St. Vincent because they involved a frightening show of force by rural estate workers, an incipient capacity by these workers to organize (a sign that always caught the attention of the Colonial Office), and scattered reports of workers being exhorted to violence by unknown troublemakers. The near-riot occurred in Kingstown in November, 1891, ostensibly over rumored federation between St. Vincent and Grenada but more directly because of a general workers' malaise. An estimated 2,000 men from the countryside, armed with clubs and some marching to the beat of a drum, smashed windows and stoned passers-by on their way to town. An ugly atmosphere had prevailed prior to this gathering, animated by threats to local planters, stories that agitators had provoked the local populace, and rumors that St. Vincent's telegraph wires were about to be cut. The H.M.S. *Buzzard* was summoned from Trinidad, seventy bluejackets off-loaded, and a machine gun taken ashore and set up at the waterfront before the crowd was dispersed and order restored. Governor Hely-Hutchinson of the Windwards came to St. Vincent from his residence in Grenada and conferred directly with some of the spokesmen for the rioters, concluding that their concerns had little to do with federation ideas and much to do with rumors of an impending head tax and a possible prohibition against emigration.<sup>7</sup>

Other disturbances occurred in succeeding years in the Lesser Antilles. For example, in April 1893, the police in Dominica killed four men and wounded four women in the "La Plaine" district on the island's windward coast. The immediate cause of the incident was local resistance to police action taken to curb an illicit traffic in illegally produced rum from Dominica to Martinique. And although all of these disturbances had clear definitions and obvious causes in particular local events, they were subsequently lumped together, at least for Colonial Office consumption, in a published sequence entitled "Notes on West Indian Riots, 1881-1903."<sup>8</sup> The view of the region from London, or more accurately the bureaucratic filing of disparate reports into a published chronological sequence that hinted strongly at linkages and cause-and-effect, may therefore have conferred, in the eyes

of the Colonial Office, an association among these various events that bore little real relationship to one another on the ground.

As the depression conditions intensified, a growing number of planters bemoaned their financial losses and, although already curtailing the cultivation of cane acreage, threatened to discontinue planting altogether. Accordingly, estate workers were commonly reported as sullen, discontented, and abandoning their normally stoic and deferential demeanors. The Colonial Office monitored with particular interest the workers' collective mood on those islands where sugar cane was the sole economic staple. So it is entirely understandable that the serious disturbances in St. Kitts early in 1896 created warning signals among those monitoring the unfolding of the West Indian bounty depression from their vantage point in London.

When the 1896 harvest season opened in mid-January on St. Kitts, strikes and demonstrations began on two estates near Basseterre over the issue of lowered wages. Pickets kept potential strikebreakers away from the estates, actions that drew crowds of the unemployed from the nearby urban area to observe and join the demonstrations. On the night of January 27th, cane fires were set on both estates, and in the next three weeks over 400 acres of cane set ablaze elsewhere on the island. The widespread incendiarism was accompanied by marches and protests throughout St. Kitts. The intensity of local unrest – which soon had broken out in nearly every village – inspired the local administrator to summon the H.M.S. *Cordelia* from Antigua. On the morning of February 17th, the *Cordelia* anchored off Basseterre, but the ship's presence seemed more to inflame than to quiet the onlookers. Meanwhile, crowds of black estate workers from the countryside had entered Basseterre where they were joined by striking boatmen and waterfront workers. The resultant throng smashed windows and looted shops. The *Cordelia* then off-loaded eighty-six bluejackets, some in Basseterre and some in Old Road Town.

The bluejackets and local police finally quelled the violence at about 3 a.m. During the night the marines had had to control the surging crowds with fixed bayonets. An officer of the bluejackets claimed that every member of his company had been struck with stones and bottles. Two rioters were shot dead during the riots and five others suffered gunshot wounds. Some protestors were reported to have used firearms. Warned of impending trouble on Nevis, two miles across the channel from St. Kitts, a detachment of bluejackets went there to prevent what had happened on the larger island (Richards 1987).

The London Colonial Office was possibly even more alarmed by the riots among indentured Indians at plantation Non Pareil in British Guiana eight months later, in October 1896. Whereas tiny, densely populated sugar cane

islands such as St. Kitts were descended from an earlier era, the coastal estates of British Guiana represented modern, efficient colonial enterprises. Their labor forces, moreover, were replenished each year by fresh, seemingly docile immigrants from India, people whose transportation from their native country and whose subsequent welfare in the British Caribbean were direct responsibilities of the Colonial Office. Of course the shootings of Muslim "rioters" twelve years earlier in Trinidad had involved indentured Indian estate workers, yet serious as this incident was, it still could be interpreted as an enigmatic Asian religious procession that had simply gotten out of control. The 1896 British Guiana incident, on the other hand, was directly related to grievances over work conditions by sugar estate workers.

The Non Pareil riot itself stemmed from actions taken by a planter who attempted to stop cane fires at the estate by transferring to other plantations several indentured workers whom he considered troublemakers. A party of police, commanded by a notoriously violence-prone officer, attempted to arrest four of the men, and a crowd of Indians quickly appeared, pushing, crowding, and surrounding the police detachment to try to prevent the arrest. The police, without reading the riot act, then opened fire on the crowd, killing five, including Jungali, a popular leader of the Indian workers. An additional fifty-nine indentured estate workers were injured in the hail of police fire (Rodney 1981: 158).

The outbreaks of violence in St. Kitts, British Guiana, and elsewhere were followed closely not only by London; they also were highlighted in the local newspapers in the other islands whereby members of the planter class, as well as all others in an increasingly literate populace, learned that riots in nearby places seemed ever more frequent and more intense. In crowded and depression-ravaged Barbados white residents already were anxious about their restive workforces. The island legislature's decision to raise import duties – effectively increasing food prices when wages were static and, in some cases, being lowered – in June 1896, heightened these tensions. More immediately, European soldiers from the Bridgetown garrison were in the process of being transferred to St. Lucia in order to defend the recently-completed coaling station there. Who would then defend white Barbadians in case of a "rising"? One anonymous note by a white Barbadian planter couple sent directly to London told of "uncivilized negros" who spoke of "cutting throats" and "taking everything the whites had" after the troops departed for Castries.<sup>9</sup>

Vice Admiral James Erskine, commander of the troops in the West Indies, offered a preventive suggestion as to how Barbadians – in the future absence of European troops – might defend themselves after the Bridgetown garrison was abandoned. Erskine's suggestion, in late July 1896, probably

soothed whites' fears little, and it also offered full acknowledgement of the possibly infectious nature of the riots that recently had taken place in St. Kitts. Erskine considered that the island's police force, sound yet undermanned, might be augmented and "strengthened by a body of mounted men, grouped in the various districts, in touch with each other, and capable of concentration." In this way, Erskine continued, the plantocracy and their allies would have a "most effective means of quelling riots or dispersing mobs before they attain serious dimensions, and preventing such a deplorable condition of affairs as recently prevailed in a neighbouring Island."<sup>10</sup>

But if a proposed mounted cavalry in Barbados were to prove ineffective in the event of islandwide riots, could troops return from St. Lucia in time to prevent a catastrophe? Similarly, if bluejackets stationed in the region were tied up with a "rising" in one place, what response could they provide to another simultaneous disturbance hundreds of miles away? The Colonial Office had to look no farther than Cuba for worst-case answers. The Ten Years' War there from 1868 to 1878 already had ruined much of the Cuban countryside. Much more immediately, of course, was that war had broken out again in Cuba during the 1895 cane harvest; by early 1896, the rebel army in Cuba was estimated at 60,000 and the entire island engulfed in a savage conflict (Schwartz 1989:239-42). Telecommunication reports of the war were monitored at the Colonial Office in London and also published in the weekly newspapers of the British Caribbean. If Cuba, two hundred times larger than one of the tiny British possessions in the eastern Caribbean, was ablaze in a matter of months after conflict erupted, how long would it take in, for example, Antigua? It is a near certainty that members of local plantocracies of the British Caribbean asked themselves these same kinds of questions, especially when riots seemed to be becoming ever more frequent and the economic conditions leading to these disturbances, if anything, were becoming worse.

The scenario described here is little better than informed speculation, and it would be inappropriate to hypothesize a crass cause-and-effect relationship between the frequency of West Indian riots and the eventual formation of the 1897 commission. Further, there is no written, flatly-stated communication yet unearthed that would substantiate such a claim. Yet even with the absence of a written record, it appears more than likely that those responsible for framing policy for the British West Indies were profoundly influenced by the escalating series of riots and considered the formation of a regionwide royal commission, whose members already were disposed favorably toward smallholder settlements (Holt 1992:332-33) as a ploy to curb social unrest and a sensible step to reaching some kind of solution for the problems in the region. The suggestion that the formation of the

commission was by and large precipitated by the escalating West Indian riots, moreover, is supported by some of the commission's earliest testimony. On the first day of 1897 in London, the commissioners heard from H.H. Dobree, Chairman of the Colonial Bank, the probable essence of why the commission had been formed. Asked to predict what would happen if the West Indian sugar industry were to fail, Dobree responded: "Well, it is almost too dreadful to contemplate [...] the labourers would be starved, and I think these men would be very dangerous citizens if they were starving. Already we have seen that; there have been some riots in St. Kitts and in Demerara [...] that is what we at the bank are most apprehensive of in the event of the sugar industry suddenly failing and being obliged to be abandoned, of riots and all sorts of terrible things."<sup>11</sup>

## DISCUSSION

If Dobree's lament can be interpreted as one influential official's informal disclosure of a main reason for the calling of the 1897 commission, a strong case can be put forward for circumscribed riots or disturbances based on particular local events having regional impacts. That is, of course, because the regionwide commission was called and orchestrated in London. It could be argued, for instance, that the 1896 riots in St. Kitts led to land-use changes elsewhere in the British West Indies because of the riot-inspired commission's strong recommendations concerning the formation of smallholder settlements for the region. Ironically, and also lending support to the notion that local events had truly regional impacts, is that St. Kitts itself did not become an island of smallholders. That is because, unlike in some of the other islands, St. Kitts was the locus of the establishment of a modern sugar refinery in 1911 with an eventual circum-island railway that had recapitalized St. Kitts into a modern, islandwide sugar cane unit by 1926 (Richardson 1983:135-40).

The written record of the riots of the 1880s and 1890s is insufficiently detailed to provide clear, definitive reasons as to why, in some cases, passive resistance became collective violence. Everywhere in the British Caribbean, the depression conditions of the late-nineteenth century produced hardship and associated complaints. And everywhere in the region, individual and collective resistance assumed a countless number of forms as it has in other times and other places (e.g., Scott 1990). In many cases resistance was an attitude or activity confined to individuals. Resistance by groups, furthermore, did not necessarily take on overt, violent dimensions. In 1887, for example, a written complaint sent directly to Victoria by three black St.

Lucians asking for the "Political Emancipation of the West Indies" was intercepted and filed by the clerical staff at the Colonial Office.<sup>12</sup> It was not unlike similar petitions sent to "The Queen," who, it was hoped, might intervene directly to curb the excesses of a tyrannical landholder or unfair estate manager.

There also were gradations of severity among overt disturbances or riots. The riot at Non Pareil estate in British Guiana in October, 1896, was actually one such event among many because there had been, according to the police in British Guiana, more than ten estate disturbances on the colony's plantations in each of the preceding two years before the one at Non Pareil had resulted in shooting deaths (Rodney 1981:154). And the reason, or reasons, why one disturbance exploded into a full-blown riot and another did not would, again, best be sought in local, specific events and personalities. The origins of the St. Kitts riots, for example, were associated with workers' protests against a particularly hard-hearted estate owner (Richards 1987). Not insignificantly, the involvement of local police in some of these disturbances seem to have intensified them. This suggestion appears particularly appropriate for the notable disturbances in Trinidad in the 1880s and the Non Pareil riot among the Indians in British Guiana in the following decade. It is therefore reasonable to suggest that, whereas many of these disturbances and riots were so judged and classified in the eyes of their official beholders, in some cases they were worsened, or even created, by the beholders themselves.

In an era when the mobility of working-class individuals was accomplished almost exclusively on foot, the dispersal of sugar cane estates throughout the countryside provided a spatial buffer against the rapid, crowd-swelling dissemination of outrage or other causes for violent outbursts. Isolated disturbances on rural plantations could usually be contained. Riots in the capital towns, however, posed an altogether different problem. And when rural peoples, bent on giving vent to their frustrations, invaded the towns – such as occurred in St. Kitts in 1896 and in St. Vincent five years earlier – administrators and colonial governors became alarmed. Those in London also possibly saw menacing parallels between the crowds of people in West Indian towns and those in Europe that had so terrorized the Continent during the previous century and changed the course of its social history. When Gustave LeBon published *The crowd* in 1895 it was in part a primer on crowd control and doubtless known in London literary circles (McClelland 1989:196). Officials in London also were daily witnesses to the great era of labor unionization in the 1880s and 1890s in Britain that was accented by urban-oriented strikes (Hobsbawm 1987:123).

Yet it is perhaps pushing contemporaneous connections too far to suggest



that Colonial Office officials saw in West Indian rioters the same potential for the kind of ideological organization that was transforming the European masses. The ranks of the Colonial Office itself were full of experienced veterans who considered themselves experts on the nature of Africans and Afro-Caribbean peoples. And there was doubtless a surfeit of contradictory advice and racist dogma as to where the Caribbean riots might lead. One way to defuse these riots, in any case, might be to encourage a class of small landholders in some of the islands. This strategy was apparently, in London's expansive turn of the century view, more sensible than clinging to outmoded and unproductive plantation colonies whose violence-prone labor forces might tie up naval squadrons for months at a time.

The general regional trend from large landholdings to small actually had begun for some of the tiny places of the British Caribbean at mid-nineteenth century as the *metayer* system gave sharecropping peasants stakes in their own islands (Green 1976:254-55). And after the 1897 commission the land-use changes in the islands themselves were not uniform throughout the region. On Dominica in the first decade of the twentieth century the existence of a small-scale peasantry was very noticeable, and by 1927 a visiting commissioner there estimated 1,334 holdings of less than fifty acres each on the island (Trouillot 1988:96-97). Land settlement schemes on St. Vincent, aided by a hurricane and volcanic eruption at the turn of the century that drove away erstwhile plantation owners, were well established on former estate lands by 1911, and by the 1930s St. Vincent had more than 11,000 acres made up of properties of less than ten acres each. The West Indian Sugar Commission of 1929 assessed the state of British Caribbean land tenure, spoke approvingly of the strong recommendations of the 1897 commission, and helped to begin land settlement schemes on Anguilla, Dominica, and Nevis. And in several other islands of the eastern Caribbean the trend was toward small landholdings. By 1961 there were roughly 70,000 farms of less than five acres each from Antigua to Trinidad (O'Loughlin 1968:103).

Greater accessibility to local lands did not end the overall dissatisfaction that brown and black peoples of the islands had over being governed by London through local white elites. Strikes and work stoppages continued into the twentieth century, events that not only demonstrated an increasing capacity of black workers to organize but which also were articulated and publicized from one island to another by working class newspapers. Black veterans of the West Indies Regiment that fought in the Mediterranean in World War I were instrumental in forming workers' organizations throughout the region in the 1920s. Then during the depression decade of the 1930s a series of riots again swept the islands. The riots of the 1930s are generally considered by West Indian historians as pivotal events that led to the forma-

tion of local political parties, the relaxation of voting requirements, and eventual political independence. The definitive history of the 1930s riots in the British Caribbean is yet to be written. When it is, it is likely that the memory and precedent of the riots in the region a generation earlier, as well as the material changes they inspired, will be discovered to have been a good deal more influential than most of us have realized.

#### ARCHIVAL NOTE

The C.O. (Colonial Office) class numbers and volumes (each individual volume number appears after the first diagonal line) are all found at the Public Record Office, London.

#### NOTES

1. This article is an amplification of a paper prepared for *Born out of resistance*, a conference dealing with "Caribbean cultural creativity as a response to European expansion," held at Utrecht University, the Netherlands, March 25-28, 1992. Much of the archival material cited here comes from research in London archives during the 1986-1987 academic year, a period funded by grants from the National Geographic Society, the Geography and Regional Science Division of the National Science Foundation, and Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University.
2. C.O. 28/221, "Act 20 of 1886-7," August 9, 1886.
3. C.O. 321/168, "Sugar Industry," August 28, 1896.
4. C.O. 264/15, St. Vincent Official Gazette, November 4, 1886, pp. 355-57.
5. C.O. 321/123, "Land Tax," October 25, 1890.
6. C.O. 321/86/no. 125, "Disturbances in St. George's on 5th Nov."
7. C.O. 321/133/no. 88, "Disturbance at Kingstown," November 20, 1891.
8. C.O. 884/9/no. 147, pp. 1-16.
9. C.O. 28/241, "Negro Rising," July 10, 1896.
10. C.O. 28/240/no. 129, "Defence," July 31, 1896.
11. Report 1897, Appendix C, part I, "London," p. 25.
12. C.O. 321/101/no. 68, "Memorial of J.E. Quinlan and 2 Others," July 22, 1887.

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TOM AUGUST

## THE WEST INDIES PLAY WEMBLEY

I have never been in the West Indies, but I am in a position to state that in certain of the fundamentals of life they are streets ahead of our European civilisation. The man behind the [Planters' Bar] counter, as kindly a bloke as I ever wish to meet, seemed to guess our requirements the moment we hove in view. Scarcely had our elbows touched the wood before he was leaping to and fro, bringing down a new bottle with each leap. A planter, apparently, does not consider he has had a drink unless it contains at least seven ingredients, and I'm not saying, mind you, that he isn't right. The man behind the bar told us the things were called Green Swizzles; and, if ever I marry and have a son, Green Swizzle Wooster is the name that will go down on the register, in memory of the day his father's life was saved at Wembley.

(P.G. Wodehouse, "The rummy affair of Old Biffy")

On St. George's Day (April 23) 1924, the Wembley British Empire Exhibition opened its doors to an enthusiastic public. Wembley was "the most lavish exercise in indoctrination" (Morris 1978:132). Never before had the British public been treated to so comprehensive a survey of the peoples, cultures and economies that comprised the overseas empire. Wembley was to be, in the view of the managing committee, "a Family Party of the British Empire, [...] its first Family Party since the Great War, when the whole world opened astonished eyes to see that an Empire with a hundred languages and races had but one soul and mind, and could apparently without any of the mechanisms of organisation concentrate, instinctively as it seemed, all its power for a common purpose." (British Empire Exhibition 1924b:10).

Wembley, of course, was not the first opportunity to acquaint the British public with the overseas empire generally or the West Indies in particular. The Colonial and Indian Exhibition of 1886, the Jubilee celebrations of 1887 and 1897, the Greater British Exhibition of 1899 and the Sydenham Crystal Palace Coronation Festival of Empire of 1911 were colonial spectacles that marked the high tide of Victorian imperialism.<sup>1</sup> The 1887 Jubilee also gave birth to a less extravagant but more permanent medium of imperial education: the Imperial Institute. Located in the museum district of South Kensington, the Institute served the purpose of commercial intelligence. As a research laboratory and a trade information bureau, the Institute was the only collecting house of information about imperial resources and industries. For these reasons, the dominion and colonial governments contributed financially to its operating costs. These same governments also financed their own commercial information bureaus in London, which would organize colonial participation in various exhibitions like the annual British Industries Fair and purchase advertising space in the great London dailies.

The West Indies were somewhat unusual in this regard. Instead of an official government agency, Britain's Caribbean colonies relied upon the aged West India Committee to represent their economic interests in the metropole. Wembley proved to be no exception in this regard. Two individuals in particular are worthy of note for their role in the dissemination of information about the West Indies. The first, Charles Washington Eves, was a prominent merchant in London with extensive West Indian commercial interests. As honorary commissioner for Jamaica at the Colonial and Indian Exhibition of 1886, chairman of the London Committee of the Jamaica Exhibition of 1891, and as the representative of Jamaica, British Honduras and the Bahamas at the Imperial Institute, Eves was a kind of unofficial go-between for West Indian-British economic relations. An active member of the Royal Colonial Institute, Eves authored the first publication in the society's series of handbooks which were designed to provide schoolchildren with better texts in imperial history and geography. His manual on the West Indies first appeared in 1889 and went through later editions in 1891 and 1893. Like the other books in the series, Eves' West Indies received the endorsement of the School Board for London (Reese 1968).

An even more influential popularizer of Caribbeana was Frank Cundall of the Institute of Jamaica. Cundall had been the Assistant Secretary for the "Colinderies" extravaganza of 1886 and would serve as Joint Commissioner for Jamaica at the Wembley show in 1924. His was the critical contribution to the development of tourism in and publicity about Jamaica, as well as the historical study of the island. At a club dinner during the Wembley summer,

the West India Committee congratulated Cundall for all his work on behalf of the West Indies. As "the legitimate successor of Bryan Edwards, Long, and other historians who have made a specific study of those parts,"<sup>2</sup> Cundall had performed true yeoman service. As one writer for the Committee's *Circular* so aptly put it: "What Mr. Cundall did not know about the history of the West Indies was not worth knowing."<sup>3</sup>

The British Empire Exhibition of 1924 marked the apotheosis of an imperialism quite removed from the music hall jingoism associated with the earlier spectacles. While the 1886 Exhibition and the Jubilee celebrations did acquaint the British public with the overseas realm, imperial federation, defense and settlement were the primary themes; much less effort was made to familiarize the public with the resources and products of the empire. Wembley, in contrast, took place in 1924, well after the expansionist phase of modern British imperialism and at a time of severe economic dislocation and indebtedness resulting from the war. Consequently, the Wembley management shifted attention increasingly toward the commercial value of the empire. Wembley was first and foremost a stocktaking of imperial resources with the purpose of maximizing colonial production and intra-imperial trade. Soon Britain would be establishing an Empire Marketing Board, organizing a "Buy British" commercial campaign and finally, in 1931, abandoning free trade for imperial preference. From the metropolitan perspective, Wembley must be seen as the beginning of an orchestrated attempt to direct the attention of British investors, manufacturers, wholesalers, retailers and ultimately consumers toward the empire.

From the dominion and colonial vantage point, Wembley offered the opportunity to develop or expand an important market as well as attract fresh investment. However, the metropolitan image of an imperial Zollverein or at the least some movement toward closer economic union was not a dominion or colonial priority. In fact, just one year prior to the inauguration of the Wembley Exhibition, Canada had signed a Halibut Treaty with the United States. Dominion nationalism was clearly on the rise after World War One with all of its economic consequences for trade and investment within a sterling zone. The West Indies, in this regard, were no exception. Even before the Great War, the United States had emerged as the single most important market for West Indian produce, with Canada closing in on Great Britain. As a source of capital, the metropole clearly lagged behind the North Americans.<sup>4</sup> Sentiment for some sort of economic federation was also growing, and Wembley did actually bring the West Indies together in a matter of common interest and purpose that bode well for future cooperation. In the mind of Sir Edward Davson, president of the Associated West Indian Chambers of Commerce and vice-president of the British Empire

Producers Organisation, and William Morrison, an honorary commissioner for Jamaica at the exhibition, hope lay in the formation of something like an Imperial Council of the West Indies, which could enter trade negotiations with the United States and act in those areas traditionally handled by the Colonial Office, the Crown Agents for the colonies and the West India Committee.<sup>5</sup> The West Indian participation at Wembley, therefore, should be seen as part of a general public relations campaign to develop markets and attract investment rather than some exercise in empire bonding as the Colonial Office and the imperialist movement in Britain clearly desired.

Unlike the dominions<sup>6</sup> whose ponderously neoclassical pavilions articulated the transnational perspective of settler nationalism and in contrast to the other colonies of the dependent empire which mounted their exhibits in buildings of an appropriately exotic architecture, the West Indies opted for an architecture that articulated the world view of the European elite. Here in the Creolized West Indies where nothing was indigenously authentic but where the European population found itself in the distinct minority, it was essential that the subaltern voice be suppressed and omitted. Consequently, the West Indies exhibited their wares in a building of the Old Georgian style, which the islands shared with British Honduras, British Guiana, and the Falklands. Located in the southeastern section of the fairgrounds directly south of the British Government Building, the West Indies and Atlantic Building, designed by Messrs. Simpson and Ayrton expressed the cultural values of the European population residing in these territories. The restrained facade with green shuttered windows and covered with a red tiled roof surmounted by a clock tower with an illuminated dial signified only a British aesthetic. As Commissioner for the West Indies and Atlantic Group participation, Algernon Aspinall, Secretary of the West India Committee, oversaw the most important West Indian exhibition since 1886.<sup>7</sup> Wembley, in fact, marked the first time that the entire West Indies participated at a major exposition.

The West Indies and Atlantic Group Building was 11,000 square feet in size with an additional acre for the West Indian garden where, along with the flora of the Caribbean, the public could view the "Columbus Anchor."<sup>8</sup> Columbus was also there, along with a statue of Rodney, to greet the visitor at the entrance to the West Indian pavilion. Once inside the vestibule, the public could conduct business at the Colonial Bank, inspect an assortment of products at the West Indies Produce Association, view models of ships at the Royal Mail Steam Packet, make a stop at the Direct West Indies Cable Company or visit the General Office before entering the main hall. One first passed under an archway advertizing "The Islands of Sunshine" and then strolled down the ten foot wide gangways which transported the viewer



from one colony to the next. The interior decorators of the West Indian pavilion chose a color scheme of orange, yellow, and green to convey an overall impression of "sunshine and happiness" (British Empire Exhibition 1924c:10). Circling overhead was a four hundred foot frieze, a panorama of Caribbean scenery interrupted only by the "bleak and snow-clad mountains" of the Falkland Islands (British Empire Exhibition 1924c:10).

The *Times's* reaction was somewhat bothered, "the first impression being of a glorified mixture of a museum and a spice market, with a bewildering profusion of turtles and flying fish, rum, brilliant seedwork, plaited hats, and live toucans and agoutis and things" (British Empire Exhibition 1924c:22). A quick right turn and the visitor found himself navigating between British Honduras on the left and the Bahamas on the right. The former spotlighted its famous tropical woods; the latter displayed its sponge, sisal and shell industries. Cameos from conch shells and tortoise-shell work could be purchased, and sponges were on sale for as little as a sixpence.

Next port of call was Barbados via the Falkland Islands.<sup>9</sup> (The floor space allotted to the Falkland Islands during the 1924 season served as a West Indian Cinema Hall when the Wembley show reopened in 1925.<sup>10</sup>) Lady Gilbert-Carter,<sup>11</sup> wife of Sir Gilbert Thomas, the former governor of the colony from 1904-10, designed the court to convey the impression of a plantation house veranda, its arches overhung with purple bougainvillea and trellises "garlanded with blue petrea holding baskets of vandateres orchids" (British Empire Exhibition 1924c:42). The arches formed alcoves and bore the name of the colony that boasted the "best bathing in the best climate" in one case, the "best cane-sugar syrup and falernum" in another. Peering through the arches, the visitor gazed at distant views of land and sea prepared by Lady Gilbert-Carter herself. Clumps of sugar cane and palms completed the trompe d'oeil.

Lady Gilbert-Carter divided the Court into three alcoves. The right hand one promoted sea products from Belgrave's Curiosity Shop and cotton growing in all its stages c/o the Barbados Cotton Factory. In the left alcove, the visitor glimpsed the hilly side of the island ("Chalky Mount") and below it pottery made from its clay. On display also was the handiwork of the Women's Self-Help Association: jars of preserves and pickles, lace-bark and fern-work doilies, fish scale work and shell brooches. A model of Codrington College filled the center space. The middle alcove was made to look like an island office with fig trees, rush furniture, shark-bone cans and raffia baskets. Here one could rest and interview Robert Haynes, the prototype of *Punch* magazine's "All-White Planter," a certain species of man "dressed entirely in white and brimful of energy."<sup>12</sup> On each side of the alcove were jars of sugar, sugar by-products and tamarinds. Over the en-

trance to this alcove was a lunette representing the Olive Blossom commemorating the founding of "Little England" over three hundred years ago. Miss Maude Law, Dora Howell, and Mrs. Delamere painted the landscapes, a popular outlet it would seem for "All White Mistresses" brimful of energy. After a brief stopover in Barbados, the public turned left and island hopped between the Leewards on the right and the Windwards<sup>13</sup> on the left before heading for their ultimate destinations: Trinidad and Jamaica.

Trinidad, Tobago, and Jamaica accounted for nearly two-thirds of the floor space of the West Indian pavilion and proved to be among the most popular exhibits in the entire Wembley Exposition. The Chocolate Lounge in the Trinidad and Tobago Court offered visitors the opportunity to rest in comfortable chairs and refresh themselves with cups and bars of chocolate from the colony and from neighboring Grenada. Punch's Wembley correspondent told of a lady who took her four children to the fair a few days before and recommended Trinidad was the place to visit. "I understand the reason for the enthusiasm now," wrote the columnist, "for rest, even though sticky is sweet."<sup>14</sup>

The Trinidad and Tobago Court<sup>15</sup> presented to the viewer a comprehensive display of the industries in the colony. Alongside models of the Pitch Lake Asphalt operation, the River Estate cocoa facility and the Experimental Sugar Factory, the Trinidad exhibit presented a great variety of timbers, including screens made of mora wood framing pictures of sporting events, public and private buildings, and scenic landscapes. The Government Railway put on view a car made entirely of island woods. Agricultural products were showcased along with a model of the new Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture and a display of the Angostura Bitters Co., then celebrating its centenary. Like the other West Indian exhibits, Trinidad and Tobago courted the metropolitan tourist, as well as the consumer. Photographs, watercolors of flowering trees, and paintings of sporting fish undoubtedly appealed to the naturalist community. The Home Industries Association of Port of Spain collected and displayed island crafts like curios, needlework and other bric-a-brac. On sale were cups and mugs, souvenirs made especially attractive for children with pictures of cacao trees and scenes of cacao production captioned with the words "Trinidad and Tobago Cocoa." Pending statistical data to the contrary, one can safely assume that all these children toting cocoa mugs and chocolate bars created an enormous rush to dental offices across the width and breadth of the U.K.<sup>16</sup>

Last port of call was Jamaica, which mounted the largest exhibit in the West Indian pavilion.<sup>17</sup> Here displayed before the public were the principal exports of the colony.<sup>18</sup> For those interested in the history and geography of the island, the Institute of Jamaica provided numerous photos of historical

buildings and sites, rock specimens and maps, rainfall diagrams, Arawak artifacts, and an assortment of publications and books. Of particular interest were Pines' painting of Lord Rodney aboard the *Formidable* and an exhibit of the "Shark Papers," documents allegedly found inside a shark which incriminated the *Nancy*, a vessel owned by naturalized American citizens of German birth captured by the H.M.S. *Sparrow* in July 1799. For the souvenir hunter, the Wembley participation of Jamaica was second to none: walking sticks of native wood carved on the spot by Adam Bish (allegedly an expert craftsman who was a "familiar figure" in Kingston);<sup>19</sup> jippi jappa hats produced and sold from a pavilion kiosk, and wicker baskets, two of which the Queen purchased on a visit to the Jamaica Court. "What sweet little baskets," the Queen remarked when presented with her mementos.<sup>20</sup> And where else but at the Jamaica exhibit could one find such liquid refreshment? For those wedded to the bean, the visitor could stay a while at the Blue Mountain Coffee Lounge, managed by a Mr. S. Jacobson of the popular Oleanders restaurant in Kingston. Friends of the bottle meanwhile could stop at Horace Myer's stand and sample a real Planter's Punch. The Jamaican Rum Bar was one of the real highlights of the Wembley show, commented upon by P.G. Wodehouse and visited by an illustrator from *Punch*, who asked the bartender how the cocktail was concocted. "The actual recipe is of little importance," replied the operator. "But it has to be shaken in accordance with the rhythm of an old Voodoo chant, which, translated into English, runs thus – One of sour, Two of sweet, Three of strong, Four of sweet." After a few "Green Swizzles" and a sampling of cigars at the Golofina and Machado stands, the visitor could return home to rest and reflect on his or her West Indian adventure.

For those still brimful of energy, the southern section of the West Indies and Atlantic Building acquainted the public with British Guiana.<sup>21</sup> British Guiana's participation was by far the largest, occupying almost half the entire pavilion space. Size alone does not explain the colony's prominence at Wembley. Floor space was costly, and clearly the organizers of the Guyanese exhibit felt the expenditure was necessary. Here was a capital-starved colony frustrated by metropolitan apathy and ignorance. The author of the official guide to the Guyanese exhibition noted that "probably large numbers of the people in the British Empire to-day still believe that British Guiana is a small island in the Caribbean Sea" (British Empire Exhibition 1924a:91). The interior of the colony held out the promise of additional millions of acres for sugar cultivation. Coffee was "running wild." "With sufficient capital and labor," the guide continued, "there is no doubt that the Colony should produce enough coffee of the finest quality to supply the whole Empire." (British Empire Exhibition 1924a:92). Great possibil-

ities awaited those who invested in oil production, cocoa and citrus cultivation, and fruit canning. The colony also offered the promise of diamond mining. "Experienced experts" were urgently needed to prospect for diamonds which, according to the official guide, were then entirely found "by the Negroes, quite ignorant of geology" (British Empire Exhibition 1924c:94).<sup>22</sup> Other commodities like Guyanese timber were already well-known and required urgent attention. At the Empire Forestry Conference of 1923, Colonial Office officials noted the growing interest of the United States in tropical woods and clearly feared capital from outside the empire would develop the forests of Guiana (British Empire Exhibition 1924c:94). Far more disturbing for the Colonial Office and the British government was the aggressive penetration of American capital in the mining of bauxite, a strategic raw material. That there was in the colony a body of petit-bourgeois and professionals eager to see American capital develop the territory only aggravated the fears of colonial officials (Spackman 1975:349).

In participating at Wembley, British Guiana sought to attract more than capital. Equally important was the need for imported labor. Of room there was plenty. Once settlers arrived in sufficiently large numbers, the official guide believed, "British Guiana will quickly [lay] just claim to the title that is at present little more than a pious assignation [...] the 'Magnificent Province'." (British Empire Exhibition 1924a:95). Recent efforts to revive immigration had yet to produce the desired results.<sup>23</sup> From the point of view of the Sugar Planters' Association, the Chamber of Commerce and the West India Committee, Indian labor remained the solution. The officials responsible for the Guyanese exhibition appealed directly to the Indian authorities (British Empire Exhibition 1924a:26):

It rests now with India to say whether the Colony is to continue as an outlet for such of her population as is desirous of going afield, where their advent will be welcomed by the Government, the Colony in general, or whether the 124,000 odd Indians now here are to dwindle and eventually be absorbed by other nationalities for lack of the influx of their own people which is necessary to preserve the racial purity and national traditions.

Statues of Sir Walter Raleigh and a Carib Indian greeted visitors entering from the western doorway, while those penetrating British Guiana from the south moved through rocks strewn on both sides as electric light with moving shadow effects simulated the rush and plunge of the Kaieteur waterfalls. Palm tree groves, "the biggest group of tropical plants ever imported into England,"<sup>24</sup> received visitors from both entrances. In the center of one of the palm groves was a bandstand built of colonial woods where the British Guiana Military Band provided the desired local color.

The organizers of the British Guiana section sought to overwhelm and astonish the untravelled Briton with information about the colony's resources. A huge twelve foot high pyramid of Demerara yellow crystals was the centerpiece of the Agricultural Court along with models of methods of rum distillation ancient and modern. Some 80,000 toy samples of these crystals were to be given away to the public at a model of the front of the Blairmont Sugar Estate. The visitor could also feast his eyes on a working model of a diamond pit where two actual "pork-knockers" were busy or actually go a-washing for alluvial gold.<sup>25</sup>

Four different types of aboriginal Indians were also on display, a living anthropological exhibit depicting "typical Indian life": women weaving cotton and making hammocks, beads and fans. In describing the presentation of the Indians, Brigadier-General Rice, the commissioner for the pavilion, mentioned in the same paragraph that the colony would also be exhibiting deer, wild hogs, monkeys, parrots, and other animals, including "specimens never previously exported."<sup>26</sup> The same could not be said for native Guianese, who had already once been on display at the Colonial and Indian Exhibition of 1886.<sup>27</sup>

For the most part Afro-Caribbeans were spared the humiliation reserved for the Indians of British Guiana and aborigines from other parts of the empire, who had been brought to Wembley to perform as artisans, curiosities, and specimens.<sup>28</sup> Other than the presence of the Jamaican hatmakers in the West Indies pavilion, Afro-Caribbean participation was limited to the uniformed appearance of the West India Regiment and the stylized recreation of plantation life for the Pageant of Empire. The Pageant was a staged performance splicing together tableaux vivants from the past centuries and from all parts of the Empire, a veritable trophy case of historical conquest and domination. Robert Haynes represented the "all-white planter" carrying a West Indian banner, followed by a buggy carrying three Jamaican hatmakers and a wagon drawn by a team of oxen carrying West Indian products. Bringing up the rear was a Mr. Ezechiel Grant of British Honduras, dressed in white astride a horse and bearing the flag of the colony (British Empire Exhibition 1924c:20).

With the third islands tour of England still fresh in the mind of cricket lovers, the West Indies continued to attract notice during both Wembley seasons of 1924 and 1925. The Jamaican Planter's Bar and the Trinidad Chocolate Lounge were sufficiently popular with the public that Gordon Hotels Ltd. planned to feature these colonial treats in their London and provincial establishments.<sup>29</sup> Sales of Blue Mountain Coffee significantly increased as a result of the exposition. Jamaican hats, baskets and cigars also did a "roaring" business at Wembley.<sup>30</sup> 1925 would prove to be the best

season on record for British tourism in Jamaica.<sup>31</sup> John Barclay, head of the Jamaica Permanent Exhibition Committee, was deeply appreciative of the efforts made by the West Indian and Atlantic Group Committee "to promote the best interests of Jamaica and to place the Island and its products before the Empire in a light which must prove of enduring benefit to the colony."<sup>32</sup> The Trinidadian authorities were similarly enthusiastic about the colony's participation. However, the same apparently could not be said for Grenada and St. Lucia which, along with British Honduras and the Falkland Islands, elected not to vote funds to participate during the 1925 season.

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The West Indian and Atlantic Pavilion at the British Empire Exhibition raises some interesting questions about the process of representation that still persist in the postcolonial era and should give Caribbean governments and tourist boards pause for reflection and self-criticism. What is to be represented, what is the history of past representations, who is doing the representing and what are the objectives of the exhibitors? Wembley did not occur in a public relations vacuum; the exposition presented a panoply of images and symbols that colored previous exhibitions. To have simply advertised the new corporate Caribbean of bauxite, timber, spices and manufactures without invoking the ethos of the planter would have been as out of context as a Bahamian travel brochure that failed to mention the islands' beaches. Nearly two hundred years after its initial founding, the West India Committee still controlled the representation of the anglophone Caribbean to the outside world. However current the West Indian displays, one could not escape the world of the planter. The blending of the latest commercial intelligence with a persistent postcard exoticism produced a blurred image that was part trade show, part grocery store and part travel agency fantasy-land. Like the Gothic train stations that cushioned the cultural shock of the industrial age, the representation of the West Indies allured the visitor with the familiar in order to introduce and accustom the public to the new Caribbean. Trapped in images created by empire, the West Indies exhibit tantalized P.G. Wodehouse's Bertie Wooster and the rest of the metropole with the prospect of playing planter in an Anglo-Saxon tropicana. The West India Committee officers, the colonial governors and officials, and the prominent island entrepreneurs who organized the pavilion and whose voices alone Wembley articulated invoked an imperial configuration of language and imagery that continues to affect West Indian public relations with the outside world.<sup>33</sup> Wembley then and Caribbean tourist boards now have only reconfigured the cultural geography of the world and the West Indies' place therein. The point is to change it.

## NOTES

1. The colonies did participate at the Crystal Palace Exhibition of 1851 but only 520 of the 14,000 exhibitors were from the empire (Mackenzie 1985:98). Britain was not the only imperial power to mount colonial exhibitions. The Dutch organized the first colonial fair in 1883, and the Belgians followed two years later. The Amsterdam exhibition was the first to display Amerindians and Afro-Caribbeans at a colonial fair. As for the French, the Paris Universelle Expositions of 1889 and 1900 in part focused national and world attention on the overseas empire. The first specifically colonial exhibition took place in 1906 in Marseilles, which hosted an even larger one in 1922. Only once did France collaborate with Britain in a joint imperial exposition, the London exhibition of 1908. Robert Rydell correctly identifies the expositions and world's fairs of the fin-de-siècle as media responsible for helping to create and popularize an imperialist ethos. To a great extent these international exhibitions "shaped the cultural geography of the modern world" (Rydell 1992:7-8). See also Rydell 1987, Greenhalgh 1988, and Allwood 1977.
2. *West India Committee Circular* (hereafter *WICC*), June 19, 1924:245.
3. *WICC* July 3, 1924:263.
4. In the period 1909-1913, the United States purchased 36% of West Indian exports; Britain, 25%; and Canada, 22% (Saul 1958).
5. *WICC* June 5, 1924:221.
6. The South African pavilion was unusual in that it was at once exotic and transnational, an authentic architecture that breathed of the *veldt*.
7. The planning of the pavilion began in 1922 when the West Indian and Atlantic Group Committee was formed at the instance of then Colonial Secretary, Winston Churchill. The first meeting took place at the offices of the West India Committee with the WIC's president, Sir Robert Rutherford, serving as chair. Assisting Aspinall and Rutherford were W. Cradick, managing commissioner; Edward Laborde (a colonial administrator in the Windwards), treasurer; Gilfred Knight, secretary; G.P. Osmond, accountant; and all the representatives from the various colonies. A commissioner for each territory supervised the particular colonial participation with the assistance of committee members drawn from the world of business or recruited for their experience in matters of publicity.
8. The anchor alleged to have accompanied one of Columbus' caravels was recovered from the sands off Icacos in 1807. Normally the anchor was on display at the Victoria Institute in Port of Spain.
9. The Falkland Islands Court, headed by W.A. Thompson and W.A. Harding, displayed dioramas of the whaling and sealing industries, a model of the Battle of the Falklands, and a diorama suggesting Melchion Island bearing real penguins on an ice flow. The Falklands chose not to participate in the second season.
10. "The West Indies islands of sunshine," filmed by a J. Rosenthal in Barbados, Trinidad, Grenada, and St. Lucia, played continuously along with Raymond Peck's movie about Jamaica. British Guiana also showed a travelogue, produced by Pathé Frères.
11. Assisting Lady Gilbert-Carter were Charles Haynes, chairman of the Barbados Exhibition Committee, and G. Eliot Sealy, commissioner.
12. June 4th issue; cf. *WICC*, supplement of July 3, 1924:5.
13. Robert Bryson represented the Leewards on the West Indies and Atlantic Group commit-

tee with assistance from Lauchlan Rose (Dominica). Gabriel Laffitte and E.D. Laborde prepared the participation of St. Lucia; J.S. Rae and Ernest Brown, St. Vincent; and R.C. Fitt, Grenada. St. Lucia and Grenada did not return for the 1925 season, but St. Vincent continued to promote its products, especially arrowroot.

14. June 4th issue; *WICC* supplement of July 3, 1924:1.

15. Sir George Le Hunte, governor of Trinidad between 1908 and 1915, and Archibald Graeme Bell, director of public works for the colony from 1908 to 1923, served as the Trinidad and Tobago representatives on the Group Committee, while W.G. Freeman and P. Lechmere Guppy served as commissioners.

16. Total attendance for the Wembley Exhibition was 27,102,498 over both summer seasons. Obviously, a great number of those visiting were children who would have been drawn magnetically to the Chocolate Lounge in the Trinidad and Tobago Court, which was repeatedly cited as one of the most popular of the colonial exhibits. In an effort to support Wembley as an instructional medium, the Board of Education subsidized organized tours of the fairgrounds from the schools. Public elementary schools wishing to visit Wembley during school hours were able to take advantage of state support as defined in Section 37(1) of the Education Act of 1921. The railway companies supported the school visits by offering concessionary rates for students between the ages of sixteen and eighteen, as well as general discounts on Tuesday and Saturday. Exhibition authorities estimated the weekly inflow of students at 150,000 (*The Weekly Bulletin of Empire Study* 1924:345).

17. Jamaica was the first West Indian colony to make a definite decision to take part and voted the largest allocation (£ 6,000) based upon the space it would occupy at Wembley; Trinidad came second with a budget of (£ 4,800) (British Empire Exhibition 1924c:6). The organizers of the Jamaican Court were W. Cradwick and Frank Cundall, joint commissioners; W. Fawcett, Jamaican delegate to the West Indian and Atlantic Group Committee; Horace Myers, William Morrison, D.S. Gideon, and A.E. Harrison, honorary commissioners. John Barclay represented the Jamaica Exhibition Committee.

18. Jamaica exhibited a great variety of agricultural products. Bananas and sugar took center stage as one would expect but one could also learn about Jamaican spices and fruits. Manufactures like ginger and kola wine, mahogany furniture, and traditional crafts were also on view. Both Myers and Lascelles operated trade exhibits adjacent to the exhibits of the West Indian Chemical Works and the Yorkshire Dyeware and Chemical Co. Over six hundred photographs documenting all facets of Jamaican life decorated the court.

19. *WICC* March 27, 1924:125.

20. *WICC* April 9, 1925:147.

21. British Guiana voted £ 20,000 for the Wembley exercise (British Empire Exhibition 1924c:6). Brigadier-General C.E. Rice and Lieut.-Colonel Ivan Davson organized the display.

22. Ann Spackman discusses the interest of the Colonial Office in diamonds as a lure with which to attract financing for railway building. The De Beers Company of South Africa proved an unwanted but necessary catch. When geologists later reported the meager size of the diamond yield, De Beers backed out and in the process delayed development schemes for the interior (Spackman 1975).

23. During the spring of 1924, Sir Joseph Nunan and J.A. Luckhoo met in Delhi with the Standing Committee on Emigration.

24. *WICC* March 24, 1924:161.



25. *WICC* March 24, 1924:161.

26. *WICC* March 24, 1924:162.

27. Cundall 1886:81, 115. In the upper garden of the exhibition there was a native compound comprised of Cypriots, Malays, Kafirs, Bushmen, Chinese, Indians, and aborigines from British Guyana. The three families (two being Arecuna and the third part Acawoio and part Macoosi) all bore English names and had been baptized. Midways lined with ethnological villages were extremely popular entertainment at all imperial exhibitions, in particular the 1889 Paris Universelle Exposition, the Chicago Columbian Exposition of 1893 and the St. Louis fair of 1904 (Rydell 1987, Benedict 1983). Living anthropological exhibits established the necessary nexus linking the idea of progress general to all colonial expositions and world's fairs with the specifically late-Victorian and Edwardian belief in Social Darwinism (Benedict 1983:34).

28. The categories of performance are discussed at length in Benedict 1983:44-45. Wembley generally offered less of this sort of sideshow spectacle often associated with late Victorian exhibitions or the great American expositions of the late-nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries but still managed to offend sensibilities. The Union of Students of Black Descent objected to the way Africans were represented at the exhibition (Mackenzie 1985:110). Generally, the display of colonials dealt with "native" or non-European life and production. If and when transnationals or settlers of British origin made an appearance, it was almost always as an agricultural or industrial technician demonstrating some mechanical process (Benedict 1983:48).

29. *WICC* March 26, 1925:121.

30. *WICC* July 31, 1924:121.

31. *WICC* April 9, 1925:147.

32. *WICC* January 1, 1925:12.

33. The Caribbean response to the Columbus quincentenary is especially interesting in this regard, with some countries like the Bahamas and the Dominican Republic struggling for center stage. Other countries have either shunned the event or greeted it with silence. Cuba, at least in the past, have offered a stark alternative to the kind of self-representation practiced by most islands in the Caribbean basin. Tragically, the current economic hardship and the desperate need for hard currency have noticeably affected the way in which Cuba promotes its tourist industry.

The problem of Caribbean self-representation mirrors the ambiguity of nationalist thought. In both cases, the discourse is derivative of a European episteme, however much Caribbean nationalist thought and self-representation seeks to establish complete independence. Partha Chatterjee (1986) offers a thought-provoking theoretical examination of this contradictory dilemma.

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THE TROPICAL RAIN FORESTS OF SURINAME:  
EXPLOITATION AND MANAGEMENT 1600-1975<sup>1</sup>

INTRODUCTION

In 1975, the year Suriname became an independent nation, slightly under 150,000 of its total surface area of somewhat more than 165,000 km<sup>2</sup> was covered by forests. Ninety percent of this forest area consisted of mesophytic tropical rain forest (Bruijning, Voorhoeve & Gordijn 1977:78-80). This makes Suriname one of the few countries in the modern world with a surface area that is largely taken up by "primary" forest.

In this article, I trace the reasons behind the persistence of this extraordinarily high proportion of forest cover, in a country that has been a plantation economy for centuries. As a rule, plantation economies do not have a good reputation regarding the preservation of forests (Tucker & Richards 1983:xiii, xvii; Simmons 1989:207-8). Also, I advance some explanations as to why Suriname seems to be an exception to this rule. I will be looking at the usual sources of destruction of wooded areas, such as land-clearing for subsistence agriculture and the laying out of plantations, forest fires, timber felling for fuel and construction, and at export of timber and other forest products. Government policy, including the role of the Forest Service, will be another topic. Finally, the role of Western enterprise will be discussed.

First, however, the reader should be briefly familiarized with the geomorphology of Suriname and the characteristics of its forests.

## SURINAME AND ITS FORESTS

"Suriname can be divided roughly into four landscape types: the young coastal plain; the old coastal plain; the Zanderij or cover landscape; and the basement complex or interior uplands" (De Graaf 1986:3). An impression of the surface areas involved is presented in Table 1.<sup>2</sup>

TABLE 1. MAIN LANDSCAPES IN SURINAME

Name	Area (km <sup>2</sup> )	Relief
Young Coastal Plain	16,200	flat
Old Coastal Plain	4,300	flat to slightly undulating
Zanderij Belt	8,750	level to undulating
Interior Uplands	135,000	rolling to hilly

This has been the usual typology of the Suriname landscapes since the 1950s (Van der Voorde 1957:32-34). In the older literature we normally encounter a division into three landscapes, under varying designations, in which the two "modern" types of coastal plains are not distinguished (Berkhout 1903:13-15; Gonggryp & Burger 1948:9). A breakdown regarding land use and forest cover in the four landscape types, as they were around 1970, produces the following typology.<sup>3</sup>

*Young Coastal Plain*

This is the main agricultural region of Suriname, which also comprises its capital, Paramaribo, where 80% of its population is concentrated. Its non-agricultural vegetation consists mainly of mangrove forests, open herbaceous swamp, and swamp forests.

*Old Coastal Plain*

In this zone we find some farming and animal husbandry. Its vegetation consists of rain or marsh forests on ridges, and swamp forest or swamp vegetation.

*Zanderij Belt*

Here we encounter the shifting cultivation of a few thousand Amerindians. The remaining vegetation is made up of open savannah, shrub savannah, xerophytic<sup>4</sup> forest types, and mesophytic forest on the unbleached soils.

*Interior Uplands*

Rapids in the major rivers mark the transition between this area and the former. Some 30,000 Maroons – formerly called Bush Creoles or Bush Negroes – and Amerindians, practicing shifting cultivation, are the sole inhabitants of this vast area. It contains evergreen mesophytic (high tropical lowland) forest, and some hydrophytic and xerophytic forest types. The area comprises about 80% of Suriname's surface area and is almost entirely covered with forests.

The nomenclature regarding Suriname's main (mesophytic) forests has never really been standardized, although recently "tropical rain forest" seems to carry the day.<sup>5</sup> In the literature of the 1940s and 1950s we find a

preference for Beard's term "evergreen seasonal forest". J.P. Schulz preferred "rain forest," J.H.A. Boerboom followed J.F. Richards in using the term "tropical rain forest," and A.T. Vink adopts a lonely stance in employing a more complex terminology, to wit "high tropical lowland forest."<sup>6</sup>

In a recent general textbook (Whitmore 1990:9), we are given a choice between "(tropical) rain forest," where every month is wet (100 mm rainfall or more), and "(tropical) seasonal forest," where there are several dry months (60 mm rainfall or less). This does not solve the problem, because Suriname experiences, on average, two months with less than 100 mm but more than 60 mm rainfall on average (Schulz 1960:16), and would therefore qualify for (n)either type. Whitmore himself seems to regard Suriname as part of the tropical rain forest area (see his map on p. 11), which tallies nicely with recent usage by Suriname experts.

The pre-World War II literature often employed the Dutch term *oerwoud*, from the German *Urwald*, which means original, primary, pristine, undisturbed "virgin" forest. Since we have been taught that undisturbed forests do not exist. Forests are in a continuous state of flux and are subject to all sorts of natural disturbances, such as floods, fires started by lightning, earthquakes, and cyclones. It is also possible that a "climax" cover has re-established itself after human interference such as slash-and-burn agriculture, a disturbance that can only be detected after a careful study of the surrounding area or by taking soil samples. There are some "giveaways" in the seemingly "pristine" forests of Suriname, such as kankantri (*Ceiba pentandra*)<sup>7</sup>, kopi (*Goupia glabra*), and local bamboo varieties (*Guadua sp.*). These "disturbance indicators" are light-tolerant or even light-demanding (pioneer) species that dominate the successional vegetation in a large – often man-made – gap in the forest cover (Schulz 1960:182; Bubberman 1988:162).

Nevertheless, there still are large tracts of forest that have been left more or less alone for long periods, and it is this kind of forest that we come across in Suriname's upland areas. Such a landscape is in a "state of dynamic equilibrium," or a "shifting mosaic steady state," and we could call it a "mature" forest (Simmons 1989:15; Whitmore 1990:23-24).

Most of Suriname's recorded history took place in the first three zones which are mentioned above. In the past, the only feasible means of access to the the Upland Interior was by way of river transport, and even that was quite difficult because one had to clear the rapids which mark the transition from the Zanderij Belt to the interior.

This story of forest exploitation and management is therefore necessarily largely confined to the 20% or so of Suriname's surface area formed by the lowlands.

## PRELUDE TO POSSESSION (1600-67)

Around 1600, the English and the Dutch began to arrive on the "Wild Coast." In 1650, the British founded a colony here, which in 1667 was conquered by the Dutch. With some short interruptions, Suriname was a Dutch "possession" between 1667 and 1975.

Although a lasting Dutch presence would not be established until 1667, Dutch traders had already been visiting the coast of Guiana for many decades. During these early encounters, wood was mentioned as a commercial product of some importance. When David Pietersz de Vries arrived here in 1634, he came across a merchant from Flushing who, during a four-month stay at the mouth of the Commewijne River, had accumulated 30 tons of snakewood (*Piratinera guianensis* sv *Brosimum guianense*). De Vries himself had arrived too early for the "new harvest" of snakewood, which would not start until the onset of the rains in November. The Arawak living near the mouth of the Marowijne River promised him a shipful if he returned after a year (Colenbrander 1911:203-6).

This brief glimpse of one of the earlier European sources on the "proto-colonial" Suriname timber trade seems to indicate two things. In the first place the Amerindians were willing to fell the required amount of timber but did not have large stocks at their disposal. This suggests that a large-scale timber trade was not one of the customary features of Arawak commerce. Second, they had to wait for the rains before they could provide the foreign merchants with a fresh load of timber. As far as I can see, this can only mean that snakewood grew in areas somewhat higher up the river,<sup>8</sup> from where it had to be rafted or – as in the case of snakewood – shipped down-river, which was only possible after the onset of the rains. This form of timber transport would remain in use up to the present.

Snakewood remained an export commodity during the eighteenth century, but at the end of the century it was already becoming scarce in the inhabited parts of the country. At the end of the nineteenth century, new stands of snakewood must have been discovered because it was once more being exported in considerable quantities. In 1975 it had again become rather rare, at least in those parts of the forests that were accessible to commercial exploitation.<sup>9</sup>

Other commercial products from the forests mentioned by early north-western European merchants were gums, honey, wax, beefwood (*Manilkara bidentata*), "redwood" (probably *Guilandina* sp. ["brazil"] and *Hae-matoxylon* sp.) and fustic (*Chlorophora tinctoria*, a dyewood). Some of these products were still being exported during the eighteenth century.<sup>10</sup> In the eighteenth century, Suriname quassia or bitterwood (*Quassia amara*)

was mentioned as a "new" export commodity, employed by physicians as a febrifuge. From time to time it was exported in considerable quantities.<sup>11</sup>

It is highly unlikely that the gathering or cutting of any of these products did much environmental damage. This observation also applies to the *conuco* agriculture (slash-and-burn) and the hunting and gathering activities of the local Amerindians, predominantly Arawak and Carib (Watts 1987:41-70). Hunters and gatherers appeared some 8,000 years ago in this area, and slash-and-burn cultivation probably started some 5,000 years later. The shifting agriculturists are supposed to have applied a 20-30 years fallow period (Bubberman 1988:161-62; Hendrison 1990:5). In the late 1960s, Vink (1970:43) calculated that

[s]hifting cultivation in the interior mesophytic forest involves burning of an estimated 14,000 ha per year. Generally speaking the nomadic agriculture revolves within the same area in the vicinity of the settlements. After the first clearing only secondary forest with little value is burnt at each subsequent rotation.

Even though the Amerindian population of the Upland Interior was possibly larger in the remote past, given these estimates the quantities of rain forest destroyed cannot have been considerable.

Potentially much more damaging was the cutting of timber for export to Barbados in the 1660s. Around 1625, Barbados had been settled by the British who had started by growing tobacco and cotton, but had switched to sugar shortly after 1640. The success of sugar-cane cultivation led to a rapid depletion of the forested areas, and fairly soon timber had to be imported for the construction of houses in Bridgetown (Watts 1987:156-205). As Suriname had been recently settled by the British, its proximity to Barbados and its virtually untapped resources of excellent timber led to an incipient export trade in timber. After 1667, when the Dutch took over Suriname, this trade came to an end, and henceforth Barbados had to import its timber from New England, which removed a potential threat to the forests of Suriname. From then on, developments inside the colony itself largely determined the fate of the forests.

#### A BUOYANT PLANTATION ECONOMY (1667-1775)

As in Barbados, sugar took root in Suriname after a short experimental tobacco phase. The technology of sugar plantations was imported from Brazil and Barbados, where Dutch, Portuguese Jewish, and British settlers had experimented with this form of production. The first settlers founded their plantations somewhat upstream along a number of rivers of north-east

Suriname, namely the Suriname (with the Para), the Commewijne, the Cottica, and the Perica. They were mainly located in the Old Coastal Plain and the Zanderij Belt. The downstream areas, although more fertile and of course nearer to the coast and therefore better situated for export to Europe, were too wet to be settled without major technological improvements in the laying out of a plantation. Fear of British, French, and Spanish naval raids was another reason for plantation owners to avoid the coast.

After 1700, however, some planters started to establish themselves in the downstream areas along the rivers, in the Young Coastal Plain. The required technology for the permanent drainage of these wet areas was imported from Holland. There, agriculture on *polders*, or areas surrounded by dikes and permanently drained by windmills, had been a feature of the landscape for centuries. With some adaptations (e.g. no windmills, and a more elaborate system of drainage ditches), this *polder* model could be used for the plantations in the swampy areas. Between 1700 and 1740, some plantations were still being laid out in the inland areas, but after 1740 all new plantations – now mostly coffee instead of sugar – were established downstream. Between 1740 and 1800, some of the old plantations were abandoned.

The gradual shift from inland to coastal areas can be attributed to various motives. In the first place, the inland soils were less fertile than the original settlers had expected, and certainly less fertile than the downstream soils. Second, the threat posed by European naval powers to the coastal establishments of the plantation economy turned out to be less formidable than the dangers from the hinterland. Inland plantations were raided by Amerindians and, as time went by, also by Maroons whose numbers increased in proportion to the growth of the plantation area (Van Stipriaan 1991:50-53).

Planters, working on tiny islands of clearings in a sea of forests, had very few incentives to use their wooded environment sparingly. Large areas were cleared for sugar and coffee, and only some of the timber felled in this way would be used for the buildings on the plantation. In Suriname, as in most countries with rain forest vegetation, the variety of species per hectare was – and is – high and only a small number of these species were used for construction purposes. Around 1900, it was calculated that one hectare of forest did not contain more than eighty trees of over forty centimeters in diameter, belonging to more than forty different species, of which perhaps not more than four had any commercial value. In terms of volume, therefore, a hectare would not yield more than 10 m<sup>3</sup> squared timber with commercial value, compared to 100 m<sup>3</sup> in Germany around the same time (Berkhout 1903:19-21; Plasschaert 1910:55). A few years later, Pfeiffer was even more pessimistic. He estimated that the average harvest of commercially valuable



wood in the forests below the rapids (the first three zones) was approximately 10 m<sup>3</sup> roundwood per ha, which is not more than 2 m<sup>3</sup> expressed in squared logs.<sup>12</sup>

Of course, these figures depended heavily on what was considered as commercially valuable wood. In the course of the twentieth century, the number of species of wood that were regarded as valuable increased. Examples of such "new" species are baboen (*Virola* sp.) for plywood and soemaroeba or simarouba (*Simarouba amara*) for light construction. This development naturally led to an increase in the estimated average yield per hectare. Therefore, J.W. Gonggryp and D. Burger (1948:82-90) estimated that the forests below the rapids contained on average 100 m<sup>3</sup> useful timber, expressed in branchless boles of more than 30 cm dbh, or ten times as much as Pfeiffer had estimated twenty years earlier. Oddly enough, in more recent research we find lower estimates, comparable to those quoted around 1900. The recent figures are the product of carefully studied series of actual harvest figures (Boerboom 1965:3, 10-18; Vink 1970:12). As an approximation of eighteenth-century ideas of what was valuable, the 1900 figures are probably nearer to the mark than the 1948 estimates.

Planters, therefore, had only limited use for the trees they had to cut before they could start planting sugar or coffee. In publications and archival sources dating from the eighteenth century, particularly in probate inventories, we come across a fairly limited number of species which were used for construction purposes. Often mentioned were basralocus or angelique (*Dicorynia guianensis* sv *paraensis*), brownheart or wacapou (*Vouacapoua americana*), bolletri, bullet-tree wood or beefwood (*Manilkara bidentata*), cedar (*Cedrela odorata*), greenheart (*Tabebuia serratifolia*), kopi, goupie, or kabokali/kabukalli (*Goupia glabra*), kwarie or iteballi (*Vochysia* sp.), locus(t), courbaril, or kawanari (*Hymenaea courbaril*), purpleheart (*Peltogyne paniculata*), wana, red louro, or determa (*Ocotea rubra*), and wassie wassie or gronfoeloe (*Qualea* sp.).<sup>13</sup> The pina palmtree (*Euterpe oleracea*) was used for the construction of dwellings for the slaves.<sup>14</sup>

It might surprise the modern silviculturist that some of these trees were used for construction purposes, but one has to remember that planters often had to make do with locally available material. Although some of these species of timber could resist Suriname's hot, wet climate and the concomitant insects for a long time, all plantation buildings, mills, vessels, and carts had to be renewed regularly. This, of course, meant that new patches of forest had to be cleared from time to time. Only a limited amount of non-timber obtained by clearing could be set aside for fuel, employed for the production of sugar. The remainder was left to be burned (Herlein 1718:67; Blom 1786:21).

Planters regularly had to clear forested areas to plant new sugar cane. This product could be harvested from the same cane stool for a number of years (ratooning). In Suriname in the eighteenth century, ratooning up to and including the fourth crop was considered to be optimal, and only approximately 20% of all crops consisted of fifth ratoons and over (Van Stipriaan 1989:100). This practice implies that plantation owners had to clear part of their still forested areas for additional cane fields after four years. The original cane fields were then left to lie fallow. From then on, the cane could rotate between fields from which the original forest cover had already been cleared. Nevertheless, many a planter had to resort to additional clearings, because the fallow period had been too short owing to exhaustion of the soil. This may have been largely the result of the insufficient application of manure during the cane-growing period.

Moreover, if the plantation owner could dispose of sufficient capital or credit, he would be able to buy more slaves, and could, therefore, expand the area under cane at any one time. In times of high and rising sugar prices most owners would be tempted to do so. In combination, rotation and expansion could exhaust the plantation's timber supply within a few decades. If we add the recurrent demand for fuel and timber for maintenance mentioned above, it will be clear that fairly soon after the laying out of their estates, most planters had to look for sources of wood outside their plantations. There is no evidence that planters set aside part of their estates for sustainable wood production, as was done in Saint Domingue in the eighteenth century (Debien 1952:43). For the nineteenth century, Van Sijpesteyn (1851:18) explicitly denied that planters used part of their arable lands to plant trees.

#### PRODUCTION OF TIMBER AND FIREWOOD

The quest for timber and fuel from sources other than the plantation itself provoked trespassing on forested domain lands, which had already been recorded in a Government Resolution of 1718. At least as early as 1736, planters acquired additional lands in the neighborhood of their estates. These timber estates<sup>15</sup> (Dutch: *houtgrond* or *houttuin*) had only one purpose, namely the production of timber and firewood for the export crop plantations. If no suitable lands could be found in the immediate neighborhood, planters sought to acquire pieces of forest further away, preferably along the same river. These timber estates functioned as annexes of the "mother"-plantation and had no economic life of their own, or even a name of their own. Such a timber estate, belonging e.g. to the plantation Hanover, was simply called "to Hanover" (Quintus Bosz 1954:77).

Soon, however, some planters started to specialize in the production of timber and firewood on independent timber estates. Certain areas such as the Para region in the 1760s were reserved for the granting of such estates. Some of the new timber estates were converted export crop plantations, particularly sugar plantations in the upland areas that had stopped producing cane when the downstream plantations with their higher yields per hectare came into production.

A good example is the plantation Han(n)over, located upstream along the Para River. The plantation, with a surface area of 2,200 *akkers* or 940 hectares, was mentioned for the first time in 1737 but it was probably older. Hanover started out as a sugar plantation, but switched to the production of timber around 1750, during a period of low sugar prices. Ten years later the estate had been almost entirely stripped of its forest cover, and the owners had to acquire an additional 1,000 *akkers* in the neighborhood. In an inventory dated 1784, Hanover was reported to have a total surface area of 5,422 *akkers* (2,320 ha), so that apparently yet another expansion had taken place, probably for the same reasons. There are several indications that it was not a profitable enterprise. From time to time, the owners tried to diversify their production and experimented with various export crops, such as coffee in 1772, cotton in 1784, indigo in 1829, *Bromelia*-flax in the 1830s, and tobacco in 1845. None of these experiments seem to have been successful. Somewhere in the late-nineteenth century, the owners abandoned Hanover, and the estate was taken over by its former slaves. In 1903, it was still being exploited as a timber estate.<sup>16</sup>

Other timber estates, particularly the ones in the downstream areas, started out as such. Much more archival research will have to be done before we can establish the ratio between converted and original timber estates. It is also uncertain when the timber estates of any description began to appear in considerable numbers. Pistorius (1763:26) mentions the existence of 10 to 12 *houtzagerijen* (sawmills), which in all probability should be read as timber estates, in 1761. In 1780-85, 139 properties were timber estates and foodcrop estates (Dutch: *kostgronden*). If we may assume that the ratio timber : foodcrop estate was similar to the 1827 ratio, this implies that there were some 90 timber estates. At the end of the eighteenth century, we find 112 timber estates mentioned, with a total surface area of 181,000 *akkers*, almost 78,000 ha, or 700 ha per estate.<sup>17</sup>

If these figures are reliable, the growth of the number of timber estates during the late-eighteenth century was impressive. It must be supposed, however, that this was not caused by a vigorous demand for wood. It is more likely that the owners of a fair number of estates that went out of business as export crop plantations had no other alternatives open to them than to turn

these into timber estates. In 1771, Government decreed that timber estates should pay a higher acknowledgement per *akker* than other properties (Quintus Bosz 1954:78). This move might have been related to the unwanted proliferation of – probably largely unsuccessful – timber estates.

Little is known about the technology of timber production. Sawmills were introduced at an early stage, the first one probably in 1677. In 1716, a sawmill was erected on the government owned estate Andresa (Oudschans Dentz 1949:13, 20). Oddly enough, Blom (1786:340) seems to suggest that all timber from the estates was sawn by hand. So either the sawmills mentioned had remained a rarity or they had gone out of business.

There are no indications that owners of timber estates ever planted trees when they had felled the original stands (Blom 1786:345; Van Sijpesteyn 1851:18; Kappler 1854:I, 43). As was the case with Hanover, they just added another piece of “virgin” soil to the estate, which then was stripped of its forest cover. If no expansion was possible or desirable, the estate was abandoned.

Timber estates were not the only ones involved in lumbering. They had competition from the Maroons. By the end of the eighteenth century Maroons numbered probably between 5 and 10,000. Felling timber for sale to the plantations or to Paramaribo was an important economic activity for the Maroon population, after the conclusion of peace treaties with the colonial government (1760, 1762, 1767). Among the annual gifts to the Maroons, specified by the peace treaties, we encounter hundreds of steel axes and carpenter’s tools, which facilitated the felling of trees and enabled them to produce squared beams; they do not seem to have used saws (Pfeiffer 1929:28).<sup>18</sup>

Although tree felling was an individual (male) activity, the axmen had to rely upon each other and their families in order to haul the trees from the forest to the bank of the nearest river. “[W]hole kin groups would team up for this arduous work, and as many as forty people would cooperate in dragging the logs to the river” (Thoden van Velzen & Van Wetering 1988:141). This feature of their relations of production limited the amount of timber enterprising Maroons could cut. Another limiting factor was that wood cutting was only one part of their economic life. The men often went on hunting and fishing expeditions and the women tended the garden plots. In fact it was only their *monetary* income that depended largely on their lumbering activities. Timber merchants, therefore, often complained that they could not rely on a regular supply of squared logs from the Maroons (Van Sijpesteyn 1851:21). The treaties guaranteed them free passage to the coast, and henceforth they shipped their timber or floated it down the river on rafts.<sup>19</sup>

How much damage was being done to the forests by the Amerindians, the Maroons, the timber estates, the plantations, and the town-population? Exact figures are lacking, but we can safely assume that the environmental impact of their activities was limited. A few thousand Maroons, a few thousand Amerindians, 60,000 slaves and under 5,000 Europeans, free blacks and mulattoes, and about 600 plantations comprising some 250,000 hectares cannot have had all that much influence.<sup>20</sup> Apart from this, most of the potentially harmful activities – shifting agriculture, and tree felling by the Maroons “above the falls” being the exceptions – took place in the three lowland zones that comprised only 20% of Suriname’s total land-area. In so far as damage was done, it was therefore largely concentrated in a fairly restricted area. Large forest fires, lasting for a month or more, such as occurred in 1746, 1769, 1779, 1797, and 1825, may have destroyed more forest vegetation than all these activities taken together (Oudschans Dentz 1949:24-7; Van Stipriaan 1991:85). I will return to this topic in more detail later on.

#### THE LONG NINETEENTH-CENTURY RETREAT (1775-1900)

Around 1775 the plantation economy of Suriname had been at the peak of its prosperity. Thereafter, high debts forced many a planter into bankruptcy. After the turn of the century, the number of plantations declined, as did the total surface area under plantation agriculture. This development was speeded up by the abolition of the slave trade in 1808. As slave deaths exceeded births, the number of slaves gradually decreased. This is not to say that all plantations fared badly. Cotton – a newcomer – and sugar did rather well from time to time, and although the number of sugar plantations declined, their average surface area increased, which might be interpreted as a sign of economic vigor (Van Stipriaan 1991).

Nevertheless, as a whole, the plantation area was shrinking continuously, as was the population. The final blow to the system came with the abolition of slavery, in 1863, followed by an “apprenticeship” period, when slaves were still under the obligation to work on the plantations albeit now for wages, ending in 1873. The timber estates shared in the general downward trend, although somewhat belatedly, as can be seen in Table 2.<sup>21</sup>

It is clear that the timber estates were doing badly at least from 1800 onwards, and perhaps even earlier. Originally, the government did not do much to alleviate their burdens. Their recognition fees were already higher than those of other properties. After 1774 they also had to pay export duties on their snakewood yield, which in 1791 was expanded to all timber sold.

TABLE 2. TIMBER ESTATES, 1761-1862

Year	Number of estates
1761	10-12?
1780/5	90?
1797	112 [ca. 80,000 ha.]
1818	119 [of which 40 in good order]
1827	64
1836	47
1842	25
1854	23
1862	20 [ca. 50,000 ha.]

Furthermore, from 1821 onward domain lands for the laying out of a plantation or a timber estate, up to then given out for free, had to be paid for, in addition to the existing recognition fees, now regarded as a tax. Small wonder that interest in the acquisition of a timber estate was slight. The situation did not improve when the export-duties on timber and the purchase price for a timber estate were abolished, in 1834 and 1835 respectively (Quintus Bosz 1954:88, 98, 120).

Kappler, traveling through Suriname in the 1840s in search of rare butterflies, recorded the sorry state – at least from the owners' point of view – of these properties along the Suriname and Para Rivers. Although their average area was relatively large, there were only two timber estates with a large slave-population, namely Berg en Dal (300 slaves) and Berlijn (over 300), and a few medium-sized estates, such as Overtoom (190), Hanover (180), and Osembo (130). The other ones were small to very small, with sometimes no more than two or three slaves. On all the timber estates along the Para River the original forest stands had been exhausted, and the slaves had to fell trees three or four hours away, along the Saramacca River. They went there on Mondays and came back on Saturdays. The felling, squaring and hauling was done in piece-work, owing to the fact that it was almost impossible to supervise this kind of labor. According to Kappler, of all the plantation slaves those of the timber estates had the best of it.

However advantageous this situation may have been for the slaves, the owners saw their costs increasing in proportion to the growing distance between their mansion on the estate itself and the actual felling place. Moreover, they had to compete with the Maroons, who were able to produce at much lower costs. None of these properties, therefore, was run at a profit, and many were under sequestration. Interestingly enough, almost all directors, and many owners of the timber estates were mulattoes. Apparently it

was the poor man's plantation. It might perhaps even be supposed that colored owners kept these properties for reasons of prestige more than anything else (Kappler 1854:I, 41-43; Kappler 1881:27-83).

This situation did not obtain in the recently colonized Nickerie area in north-western Suriname. During the two British interludes, a number of predominantly British entrepreneurs had settled in this area in order to produce cotton. When the short cotton boom was over, a number of the new colonists started the exploitation of the "fresh" forest stands in this area. They had many advantages over the "old" timber estate owners, because there was more commercial timber available, nearer to the coast and the river, for the felling of which they paid lower piece-rates. Nickerie, therefore, was the only plantation area where during a large part of the nineteenth century timber was produced (and exported to Caribbean islands) at a profit.<sup>22</sup>

As a rule, however, timber estates were doing badly and were barely competitive. This development may have boosted the lumbering activities of the Maroons, some of whom – particularly Ndjukas – had moved nearer to the plantation area during the first decades of the nineteenth century. They had come to depend more on their timber trade anyway, because in 1849 government had stopped sending the annual gifts which had been part of the eighteenth-century peace treaties. Given the restricted nature of demand, however, this increase in production – if any – must have been limited. When there was a shortlived drop in timber prices during the early 1850s, some of the "coastal" Ndjukas temporarily moved back to their villages further inland, only to return when prices went up again (De Beet & Sterman 1981:14-15; Thoden van Velzen & Van Wetering 1988:12-13).

After 1880, when gold was found in the hinterlands of Suriname and French Guiana, the Maroons largely lost their interest in the timber trade because they could earn much more transporting the gold diggers and their luggage. Only after 1920, when the goldrush petered out, did they return to logging (Thoden van Velzen & Van Wetering 1988:21-23).

Maroons were also involved in a most curious venture at Albina, a village on the estuary of the Marowijne, in the north-east corner of Suriname. The same Kappler whom we met traveling through the old plantation area in the 1840s had established himself here as a timber merchant, naming the place after his future wife. At some distance from Kappler, a Corsican by the name of Monte-Cattini (or Montecatini) had also settled with the same purpose. Both merchants bought large quantities of squared logs from the Maroons (and Amerindians?) of the Upper Marowijne for export to the Caribbean islands and to Europe. Kappler, who obtained a land-grant for a timber estate at Albina – probably the last one in the nineteenth century –

also attempted to establish a colony of German woodcutters and carpenters on his estate, in order to produce higher quality beams and – sawn – boards for export. Difficulties with his “indentured laborers,” the lukewarm reception of his timber in Holland, high freight costs, low returns, and the death of his Dutch patron militated against his enterprise becoming a success. Nevertheless, when he left Suriname in 1879, in thirty years he had sent twenty-three large shiploads of timber to Amsterdam, beside occasional shipments to Paramaribo, French Guiana, Barbados, and Guadeloupe (Van Sijpesteyn 1851:21-22; Kappler 1881:223-486).

Not all demand, therefore, was generated locally. Throughout the nineteenth century, timber in various forms was being exported to the Netherlands and the Caribbean islands, most of it as round logs or squared beams. However, this never amounted to more than 2 or 4,000 m<sup>3</sup> per year, with a monetary value that fluctuated between 0.5 and 1.5% of total export earnings (*Koloniaal Verslag*). Export to Europe failed for a number of reasons. The quality of the timber produced left much to be desired, owing to primitive methods of felling (trees were not girdled before being felled), improper treatment (no drying), and a general lack of quality control. Labor was often scarce and frequently ill (malaria) and therefore expensive, and freight costs were high as well. The high quality hardwoods of Suriname were largely unknown in Europe, which made it difficult to penetrate the established commercial timber channels. Carpenters complained that various species were difficult to work with (even teak had to overcome this kind of conservatism), and important firms of timber merchants had vested interests in other hardwoods. Finally, no one in Suriname could assure prospective buyers of a regular supply of the required species and dimensions, because supply was too irregular.<sup>23</sup> The export of squared timber consisted predominantly of cedar and smaller quantities of purpleheart, brownheart, greenheart, locus, and beefwood (Berkhout 1903:61-62). Domestic consumption of timber at the end of the nineteenth century was estimated at 9,000 à 10,000 m<sup>3</sup> per year (Berkhout 1903:70; Plasschaert 1910:72).

At the end of the century, the Suriname forests were in a paradoxical situation. On the one hand, most of the forests – predominantly but not exclusively those of the Interior Uplands – were not accessible to commercial exploitation, owing to lack of roads or navigable rivers. Only a few thousand Amerindians and Maroons used these forests for their fairly limited needs. In some areas, where settlers had moved away, forest cover was slowly encroaching on stretches of savannah vegetation (Berkhout 1903:9). On the other hand, most accessible forests had been ruined by Maroons or timber estate owners, who could not be bothered with sustainable exploitation. In the accessible forests some valuable trees, such as cedar, had



become very rare (Plasschaert 1910:59). Suriname, therefore, had treated the fringes of its forests badly, but it had no part in the global deforestation of the nineteenth century (Tucker & Richards 1983).

#### GOVERNMENT AND WESTERN ENTERPRISE (1900-75)

The role of government in forest management and exploitation had been negligible up to the end of the nineteenth century. In so far as fiscal measures (the above-mentioned decrees of 1821, 1834, and 1835) were employed as instruments of land-use policy, they do not seem to have had any influence. The creation of new timber estates had stopped almost entirely and the old ones were slowly but surely fading away.

In 1877, at the end of the apprenticeship period, government switched from a policy of alienation to one of concessions of forest lands. In 1914 and again in 1922, these regulations were revised in order to stimulate (foreign) investment, without losing sight of government revenue and – at least in theory – the quality of the forests. At the turn of the century, some 125,000 hectares had been given out in this way. In the late 1920s this area varied between 500,000 and 600,000 ha.<sup>24</sup> It may have appeared to contemporary observers that the exploitation of Suriname's forests was finally taking off. We will see presently that these expectations were unfounded.

During the nineteenth century, various officials in the Netherlands and Suriname had attempted to stimulate the production of durable timber, to be used in the mother country for ship-building, sleepers for railways, and suchlike, largely because oak and other species of hardwood were getting more expensive. In 1836, with this end in view it was decided to start an experiment with government exploitation of a forest area. For this purpose, a forest range was established on the government-owned estate Andresa, on the Coppename River. The attempt failed because a considerable proportion of the timber shipped to the Netherlands left much to be desired and was, moreover, more expensive than oak. In 1842, the Navy stopped buying Andresa timber, and although other outlets were found, and a state-of-the-art steam-powered sawmill had been installed in 1846, the forest range was given up in 1849. Throughout its thirteen-year existence it had been run at a loss (Van Cleef 1841; Kessler 1989). Small wonder that the next attempt at government exploitation had to wait until 1904, when it was combined with the creation of an experimental Forest Service (*Dienst van het Boschwezen*), largely based on a report by the forester Berkhout, and published in 1903. In the meantime, Suriname had been lucky with its forests for once, when balata – a rubber-like substance from the bullettree –

was discovered in exploitable quantities. Exploitation started around 1890 and picked up pace after 1907, with record export returns of over 4 million guilders in 1911 and 1913, and fairly high export levels up to and including 1931 (Van Traa 1946:128-32).

The introduction of an experimental Forest Service, in 1904, featuring a combination of government exploitation and government management was copied from the teak forests of Java in the Netherlands Indies (now Indonesia), and the first foresters in Suriname all came from the experienced Netherlands Indies Forest Service.<sup>25</sup> Nevertheless, government exploitation was stopped in 1910 owing to continuous financial losses. This was caused by high wages, difficulty in recruiting laborers, wastage of timber during the cutting and squaring operations, difficulties with the hauling of logs by buffaloes, high freight costs, and demand-side problems in the Netherlands. A skeleton – still experimental – Forest Service was, however, retained (during many years manned by only one forester), in order to continue the silvicultural research that the Service had initiated, and to supervise the exploitation of the forests by private entrepreneurs. In 1917, the experimental phase of the Forest Service came to an end. Finally Suriname had a real – albeit small – Forest Service.

This was certainly none too early, as since 1916 a number of enterprises from the U.S.A., the Netherlands, and Belgium had been given large concessions, sometimes amounting to hundreds of thousands of hectares. Names mentioned are the Surinam Extracts Cy., the N.V. Surinaamsche Hout- en Pulp Mij., the Broadhurst Lumber Cy. (W.L. Kann), all three American, the N.V. Westindische Houthandel (under the direction of the local firm Kersten) and the Indische Hout Import Mij., both financed by Dutch capital, the N.V. Algemeene Tropische Cultuur and Industrie Mij. (Tropica, Belgian capital), the N.V. Nieuwe Eendracht, and the firms Strang and Samson. It seemed as if the Suriname forests had been finally discovered by Western capital, and that the dawn of large-scale forest exploitation had arrived. The 1921 recession, however, put an end to these hopes. The enterprises had to limit or give up their operations, and the Forest Service was abolished in 1925 owing to budget cuts. Although better times – measured in terms of timber exports – returned in 1926, the 1929 crisis followed too soon for a revival of the Forest Service. Even government-income from balata was insufficient to save or revive the Forest Service.<sup>26</sup>

Nevertheless, important insights had been gained during the period of its existence. In the first place, timber enterprises needed the Forest Service for its exploratory activities. The first foresters, fully aware of the fact that the *Urwälder* of Suriname usually yielded very low amounts of valuable timber, had been searching for “pure stands” of useful trees or at least stands with a

high density of valuable trees. Plasschaert discovered some areas with a high density of Demerara greenheart (*Ocotea rodiaei*) and Gonggryp found large, almost pure stands of mora (*Mora excelsa*); exploitation by private enterprise followed in the wake of these discoveries. A stand of Possentri (Poison tree: *Hura crepitans*), discovered in 1922, was almost immediately worked by the American entrepreneur Kann; a good example of the trade following the flag.<sup>27</sup>

Second, the foresters discovered that they knew next to nothing about this type of tropical rain forest. All the early foresters came from Indonesia, where the Forest Service had ample experience with teak (*Tectona grandis*), but not with much else. Teak is a deciduous tree, usually found in pure or almost pure stands in monsoon forests, and the foresters were scarcely prepared for the highly varied evergreen forests of Suriname. Thus they started experiments with various felling-cum-regeneration methods. The earliest ones were carried out on forest ranges established along the recently constructed railroad from Paramaribo to the interior. The first method adopted was the *periodische Femelhieb*, a polycyclic system, under which all trees of 40 cm dbh and over were harvested periodically, nowadays called a "diameter limit felling system." Forest regeneration was left to the natural powers of recuperation of the forests, only somewhat aided by girdling the larger undesirable trees. This method was soon found to be unsatisfactory, because it stimulated the growth of "worthless" fast-growing pioneer species instead of valuable hardwoods. The foresters then (1906) started with clear-felling, the usual practice in Java's teak forests at that time, in combination with artificial plantations of desirable species such as mahogany and rubber (*Hevea brasiliensis* and *H. guyanensis*). Maize and cassava were cultivated between the saplings in order to suppress weeds. These methods were not very successful either. Although the experiments with "plantations" of desirable trees – including an arboretum in 1911 – were continued, the foresters returned to variations in natural regeneration, aided by cutting the undergrowth of "good" trees, burning "bad" trees, and strip-planting of desired species in gaps in the forest.<sup>28</sup>

Attempts were made to involve the black peasantry in forestry experiments. Slash-and-burn cultivators who had volunteered were told which trees they should save on the plot to be cleared; after clearing and burning they were paid a certain amount of money. The Forest Service then planted seedlings of valuable tree species before the cultivator planted his cassava. For the upkeep of these seedlings the peasant received another payment. After the cassava harvest, the Forest Service took over the maintenance of these plots (Berkhout 1917:63).

One wonders whether these "intercropping" methods were copied from

Java, where they had been introduced in the 1870s (and where they are still being used today under the name *taungya*), or whether they had been found locally among the Amerindians. The Brazilian Kayapó are supposed to have manipulated their wooded environment in a comparable way. In 1946-47, Gonggryp and Burger discovered an Amerindian timber concession near Wassiabo, on the Corantijn River, growing kopi (*Goupia glabra*) on a sustainable basis, with foodcrops between the trees.<sup>29</sup>

When in 1925 the Forest Service was abolished, none of these experiments could be deemed satisfactory, and it was clear that, whatever their silvicultural merits, expenses would never be recouped by government income from private enterprise. Some of these experiments survived into the 1940s, but most of them had been severely damaged by fires and neglect. Although some experience had been gained with silviculture in this part of the world, it is doubtful whether later foresters made full use of the results of the earlier experiments, as will be shown presently.

The resurrection of the Forest Service had to wait until after the Second World War. In 1947, the future of Suriname's forests was determined for a long period to come by two events, namely the reestablishment of the Forest Service and the arrival of the Dutch Bruynzeel Company, which received an initial 500,000 hectares in concession. In 1973, a total of 1,7 million hectares had been given out, with a production of 168,000 m<sup>3</sup>, of which 56,337 m<sup>3</sup> was exported. This was approximately twice the quantity exported in 1950, when Bruynzeel had recently started its operations, and a quantum leap compared to the 4,000 m<sup>3</sup> of 1900 (Bruijning, Voorhoeve & Gordijn 1977:80-83, 104-105).

Again we find that the companies follow where the Forest Service leads, even more so than before the Second World War. The Service has been constructing all-weather roads to and skid-tracks into the exploitable forests in what is usually called the Forest Belt (parts of zone 3 and the northern fringes of zone 4). Without these roads, and the inventarization of the forests also carried out by the Service, the exploitation of the areas concerned would have been unthinkable for any company. Only the Bruynzeel Company had its own inventory and road-building program in its long-term timber concessions. Between 1953-54, when the Forest Service started with its management plans, and 1970 about one-third of the timber production of state lands – or almost the entire increase since 1954 – came from “managed concessions.”<sup>30</sup>

The Service was again involved in silvicultural research, which tried to optimize both yields and sustainable growth. Schulz was the first to initiate a regeneration experiment in 1956-57 by “refining” the areas under management plans before (polycyclical)<sup>31</sup> exploitation, that is killing mature

unwanted species in order to help the saplings of desirable trees. This was exactly what the first foresters had attempted to do, with very limited success. In other words, the Forest Service was back to square one.

In the 1960s the Service adopted a monocyclical diameter limit felling system (the polycyclical system caused too much damage), and added periodical "liberation," that is cutting the undergrowth in order to aid desirable species, to the already practiced "refinement." This method led to satisfactory increment rates of commercial species, but it was much too expensive owing to its labor intensity. Therefore, "natural" regeneration work on a practical scale came to a standstill in the late 1960s, and experiments with strip-planting and enrichment-planting were started, particularly with *Virola*, *Simaruba*, and *Cedrela*. These experiments are still being carried out.

Throughout the whole period, the Forest Service had been laying out "monocultural" plantations, as they did between 1904 and 1925. Only this time they grew several species of pine, mainly *Pinus caribaea*. Owing to high labor costs, these experiments were stopped around 1975, although the pine cultures are still there.

At the end of the period under discussion, in 1975, a start was made with an extensive low-input-low-output polycyclic system with "refinement," aiming at periodic harvesting of volumes equal to the increment of the commercial stock. This purports to be an economically justified sustained yield silvicultural system.<sup>32</sup>

Comparing the 1904-25 experiments with those of the period 1947-75 and beyond, one gets the impression that seventy or more years of silvicultural research have not led to much progress (cf Jonkers 1987:13). Much of the present "orthodoxy" can be regarded as a modified version of work done by people like Van Asbeck, Berkhout, Gonggryp, and Plasschaert between 1904 and 1925.<sup>33</sup> Lack of lasting success with silvicultural research by the Forest Service certainly did not stop the timber companies from expanding their activities. One can only speculate to what extent these attempts at management of the exploited forests have delayed the growth of the logged-over areas.

More progress had been made in the field of technological development. Around 1900, almost all felling and squaring was done with axes, and squared logs were skidded manually over *knuppelwegen* (skid-tracks made of poles), sometimes many kilometers in length, to the river. Attempts by the Forest Service to haul timber by buffaloes from the logging camps to the timber depots along the river were less successful. From the depot, the logs were shipped or rafted to Paramaribo. Timber, cut at the forest ranges of the experimental Forest Service was transported by rail. The capital at the time

boasted of three (steam?) sawmills. In 1915, Suriname had six sawmills, one of which was located outside the town. On the timber estates hand saws had been used, but with the demise of these properties the saw may have fallen largely into disuse. Nevertheless, around 1925, the black peasantry of the Para and Suriname districts were again reported to be quite capable and willing to use hand saws.

Skidding remained a problem. In the 1920s, private entrepreneurs experimented with floating steam-winchers (Lidgerwood) and tractors (Fordson), but the results were rather disappointing owing to a lack of experience, high costs, and low yields per hectare in relation to expenses. Most timber, therefore, was still being dragged out by human or animal power.

In 1925, there were at least two modern steam-sawmills. In 1947, however, all sawmills were regarded as "antiquated." Demand being as high as it was after the war, several enterprises had by then ordered new machinery from abroad. In the meantime, the normal saw and the two-handed saw had also reached the Maroons and the Amerindians. Skidding with steam-winchers and tractors and transport by steam-engines over short rail-tracks on forest ranges were seen side-by-side with human and animal traction over skid-roads or rails.

Around 1970, high forest logging had become largely mechanized. Felling was now partly done by chainsaw, and crawler tractors were being used for skidding. Transport by truck bridged the distance between the concessions and the factories. There were thirty sawmills, varying in capacity from 500 to 50,000 m<sup>3</sup> roundwood per year. The Bruynzeel Company owned the largest mill as part of a large integrated timber complex, which included factories for plywood and particle-board, products which by then dominated exports in terms of volume.<sup>34</sup>

Summing up, it can be said that once the – second – Forest Service had enabled private enterprises to penetrate the inland areas away from the rivers by carrying out forest inventories and by constructing permanent roads and skid-trails, ongoing mechanization after the Second World War had made it possible to overcome many difficulties in felling, skidding, and transport which had troubled the timber companies before the war. It is hardly likely that the Service's system of managed concessions did much to stop deforestation. The attack on the Suriname forests, at least those of the Forestry Belt, had been finally launched in earnest, albeit in a more or less controlled way. The interior, however, was still largely unexplored and unexploited.

## VANISHING FORESTS ?

Reliable figures of Suriname's forested area are hard to come by. I have presented a number of estimates in Table 3.<sup>35</sup>

TABLE 3. ESTIMATES OF SURINAME'S FOREST COVER, 1903-90

Year	Area under forest (ha)	Source
1903	14,500,000	Berkhout 1903:11
1929	15,500,000	Pfeiffer 1929:17
1948	15,000,000	Gonggryp & Burger 1948:86
1955	14,860,000	Lindeman & Moolenaar 1955:13
1970	14,850,000	Vink 1970:12
1990	13,200,000	Henderson 1990:11

Most if not all of these figures are rough estimates, and their value must be regarded as very limited. The most detailed calculations are those of Lindeman & Moolenaar and Vink, whose estimates I am inclined to accept as rather reliable. If Henderson's figure is equally accurate, the first large-scale attack on the forests would have taken place after 1970. This supposition is in accordance with my suggestion, presented above, that the combination of (second) Forest Service activities, the presence of Bruynzeel and other modern timber companies, and increased mechanization during the last decades have led to the first serious increase in logging. The pre-1970 figures do not suggest that logging activities before that year, or, for that matter, other potential sources of deforestation, had much impact on total forests cover.

Gonggryp and Burger would have disputed this conclusion. They regarded man made forest fires an increasingly important threat to Suriname's forests, surpassing all other causes of deforestation in scope.<sup>36</sup> Forest fires, indeed, occur rather frequently, as is demonstrated in Table 4.<sup>37</sup> For the period covered by the data collected, in the eighteenth century there was a forest fire every seventeen years on average, in the twentieth century (counting from 1899) every sixteen years. I have insufficient data for the nineteenth century, and two years in the table are only mentioned in the source as "very dry" ones. Exceedingly dry years were not necessarily years of forest fires, as demonstrated by 1958 when it was very dry (Schulz 1960:18), but I have found no references to fires.

This is not the place to speculate at length whether we are dealing here with some sort of "El Niño" effect, or whether the suggested periodicity – partly of my own making by leaving blanks in the table where forest fires

TABLE 4. FOREST FIRES IN SURINAME, 1746-1964

18th century	19th century	20th century
		1912
	1825	1926
1746	1844 (?)	1940
1769		1964
1779	1877 (?)	
1797	1899	

N.B. Years with a question mark between brackets are mentioned as "very dry" only.

might have occurred – is entirely spurious. The table and the calculations are presented here only because I want to demonstrate that the frequency of forest fires was not increasing in the twentieth century, as Gonggryp and Burger suggested. Of course, ideally we should have had data on the forested areas destroyed by these fires. Gonggryp and Burger supposed that hundreds of thousands of hectares were lost in dry years, and Vink gives a figure of 160,000 ha for the 1964 fires. For other years, however, I have no data. Nevertheless, it seems safe to conclude that Gonggryp and Burger were right as regards their suggestion that more forest was lost by fire than by other agents, at least before 1970.

Finally, we would like to know whether all forest fires – and even all savannahs – were, indeed, anthropogenous, as was also stated by Gonggryp and Burger (1948:9). Vink (1970:42) seems to agree: "Forest fires in Surinam are virtually 100% man-caused." Yet, regarding other tropical countries (Brazil, Kalimantan, New Guinea), scholars do not hesitate to argue that lighting has been causing forest fires since time immemorial. It is far from clear why Suriname should be an exception to the rule.

This is not to deny that many a forest fire was caused by man, either inadvertently or on purpose. Elsewhere, "firing" was used to create even-aged pure stands of certain trees and fresh grasses for grazing (Fiedel 1987:162; Simmons 1989:79; Hecht & Cockburn 1990:35). It would be truly amazing if Suriname's forests had not been manipulated similarly, which takes us back to the non-virgin character of the tropical rain forest, even in Suriname.

## CONCLUSIONS

Summing up this essay on the management and exploitation of the forests of Suriname, it can be said that, even in remote periods, these forests were certainly not undisturbed, either by natural or human agents. It is, however,



also clear that, at least until the 1960s, exploitation was limited to the accessible fringes, and management was virtually absent.

This state of affairs can be largely ascribed to a lack of people. Settlements of planters were concentrated in areas near the coast and along the rivers, and the vast hinterlands were left to the – often hostile – Amerindians and Maroons. Fear of these people was not the only reason the planters did not venture into the inland areas. Limited soil fertility, rapids in the rivers (which made transportation onerous), and the availability of sufficient amounts of timber in the lowlands also caused them to stay near the coast. Even in the coastal areas not all suitable lands were taken up by plantations for lack of roads or rivers.

Limited demand for Suriname timber in Europe also played a role. It was hardly known and too expensive, owing to high freight costs, high wages in Suriname, variable quality and quantity, and an inelastic supply. High prices were also related to levels of technological development. Only well-mechanized enterprises, which had solved the problems of logging, skidding, transport to the town or the factory, and sawing or other forms of processing, could produce at a profit.

The absence of a permanent Forest Service was another factor. Knowledge of the forests was virtually absent. Only after a thorough inventarization of a forested area would a timber company move in, and then only when the Forest Service had constructed all-weather roads and skid-tracks. As Suriname was already heavily subsidized by the mother country since the beginning of the nineteenth century, money for a permanent professional Forest Service was not available until 1947.

“As the Second World War ended, the forests of the Amazon stretched almost as far as they had hundred years earlier. Yet within thirty short years the trees had begun to fall [...]” (Hecht & Cockburn 1990:104). This is also the story of Suriname, although compared to Brazil it is not doing so badly. In both areas, road construction in the 1970s opened the way to logging, but Suriname has no Trans-Amazonian highway as yet, and no landless peasantry and cattle breeders to follow the loggers. Deforestation in Suriname probably has increased more over the last twenty years or so than ever, but compared to Brazil – or, for that matter, Kalimantan – the scale is not alarming. In the meantime, one can only hope that the Forest Service finally comes up with an economically feasible system of regeneration.

## NOTES

1. This is a rewritten version of a paper presented to the "Conference on Forests and Environmental History of Latin America," held at San José, Costa Rica, February 18-22, 1991. I am grateful to Rosemarijn Hoefte, W.S.M. Hoogbergen, and H.U.E. Thoden van Velzen for their comments, and especially to Alex van Stipriaan for a number of predominantly archival references.
2. Adapted from table 2.1 in Poels (1987: 7).
3. The following description has been taken, with some adaptations, from Vink (1970:4-5).
4. Xerophytic: on dry, leached soils; mesophytic: on well, but not excessively, drained soils; hydrophytic: on wet, water-logged soils. This is a typical 'Caribbean' terminology, in use after the Second World War for Suriname.
5. See e.g. the titles of three recent Ph.D. dissertations, namely those of De Graaf (1986), Jonkers (1987), and Hendrison (1990).
6. Gonggryp & Burger 1948:18; Lindeman 1953:v; Schulz 1960:190; Boerboom 1965:2; Vink 1970:6.
7. The population regarded the kankantri as "holy," and therefore often spared them (Berkhout 1903:20).
8. Map II from Gonggryp & Burger locates snakewood in the Zanderij Belt and the Interior.
9. Snakewood (Dutch: *letterhout*; it has, however, nothing to do with printing) is used for cabinet-making and marquetry; data are taken from Blom 1786:340; Nassy *et al.* 1791:76; Berkhout 1903:58-59; Van de Voort 1973:238; Bruijning, Voorhoeve & Gordijn 1977:287.
10. These references are taken from Nassy *et al.* 1791:76; Berkhout 1903:60; Harlow 1925:135; Record & Hess 1944:274-79; Van de Voort 1973:238; Bruijning, Voorhoeve & Gordijn 1977:286-87. "Redwood" and fustic are no longer mentioned as commercial species in more recent publications (Japing & Japing 1960; Jonkers 1987:145-46). So either commerce is no longer interested in these dyewoods, or they have been cut out, or they came from inland areas that have not yet been inventoried.
11. Data on quassia are from Record & Hess 1944:512; Oudschans Dentz 1949:23-26; Van de Voort 1973: 238.
12. My own calculation, based on Pfeiffer 1929:22 and Gonggryp & Burger 1948:91. Most earlier calculations are expressed in squared logs, because most timber arrived in that state in Paramaribo. Later on, when more timber was shipped as roundwood, and in accordance with international usage, calculations and estimates were based on roundwood or, in the case of standing trees, on branchless boles above the buttresses, of which the diameter was measured at breast height or above the buttresses, often abbreviated to dbh.
13. Probate inventories of eighteenth-century plantations can be found in the Algemeen Rijks Archief (General State Archives; The Hague; ARA for short), 1st section, Bestuursarchieven Suriname, in the collection Oud Notariële Archieven (ONA for short). Details on the properties of these trees and their use in the eighteenth century can be found in Pistorius 1763:51-53; Hartsinck 1770:66-85; Fermin 1785:218-28; and Blom 1786:335-45. For the identification of wood species mentioned in the older literature and the archives, I have used Bruijning, Voorhoeve & Gordijn 1977:287; Gonggryp & Burger 1948; Japing & Japing 1960; Jonkers 1987: 145-46; and Record & Hess 1944.
14. See e.g. Blom 1786:9-10; Gonggryp & Burger 1948:22; and Bruijning, Voorhoeve & Gordijn 1977:133.

15. I have avoided the term plantation for these lands, because it carries the connotation of sustainable wood production, for which there is no evidence.
16. Data on Hanover can be found in ARA, ONA, 192, 211, 235, 703, 263, 832; ARA, 1st section, Bestuursarchieven Suriname, Onbeheerde Boedels & Wezen 1828-76 (Orphan Chamber; OB&W for short), 1949; Gemeente Archief Amsterdam (Municipal Archives Amsterdam), Particuliere Archieven 600, 544; Quintus Bosz 1954:429; Kappler 1881:40, 72-73; Berkhout 1903:9.
17. Pistorius 1763:26; Nassy *et al.* 1791:5; *Surinaamsche Almanach* 1797. In 1827, there were 64 timber estates and 36 foodcrop estates (together 100), and the total number of plantations was 443 (ARA, Archief Ministerie van Koloniën (AMK for short) 1813-49, 791; Verbaal 25.3.1831, No. 41).
18. For such a list of 'gifts', see De Beet & Price 1982:41.
19. On Maroons, peace treaties, and lumbering see Hartsinck 1770:780-806; Kappler 1881; De Beet & Sterman 1981; De Beet & Price 1982; Price 1983; Hoogbergen 1985; De Groot 1986; Thoden van Velzen & Van Wetering 1988.
20. Probably, I have somewhat overstated the number of plantations and hectares. Van Stipriaan (1991:56), who has carefully scanned the archival records for data on plantations, found approximately 400 sugar and coffee plantations in the period 1770-95, with total holdings in 1770 of 161,300 hectares. However, Nassy *et al.* (1791:5) report 591 plantations around 1785 and Oudschans Dentz (1949:33) 614 in 1793. These figures may include plantations that had already gone out of business. Van Stipriaan's figures do not include the timber and foodcrop estates, which, according to Nassy *et al.*, totaled 139 in approximately 1785. Given the surface area in 1797 of 78,000 hectares of 112 the timber estates alone, we may add approximately 80,000 hectares to Van Stipriaan's total, which leads to a grand total of approximately 240,000 hectares. For population figures see Van Lier 1971:22-23; Van Stipriaan 1991:326-66.
21. Sources for 1761, 1780-85, 1797, and 1827 were given above; the other sources are Lammens 1982:25; ARA, AMK 1813-49, 1135; Kappler 1854:41; *Koloniaal Verslag*, relevant years.
22. ARA, Collection van Heeckeren, 69 [1826]; Collection Joh. van den Bosch, 108 [1828]; OB&W 1828-76, 834 [1841]; Heckers 1923:103 [1858].
23. See e.g. Van Sijpesteijn 1851:7-8, 19, 21; Berkhout 1903:38-40, 60-63, 71-72; Plasschaert 1910:25; Berkhout 1917:9-15; Van den Broek 1917:9.
24. Berkhout 1903:11; Plasschaert 1910:69-70; Pfeiffer 1929:25; Quintus Bosz 1954:307-09.
25. All references to forest management and exploitation in Indonesia have been taken from Boomgaard 1988.
26. Plasschaert 1910:109; Berkhout 1917; Pfeiffer 1929:7-8, 35-41; Van Traa 1946:116-26; Gonggryp & Burger 1948:68-69; Quintus Bosz 1954:308-09.
27. Berkhout 1917:40-50; Van den Broek 1917:25-26; Pfeiffer 1929:18, 35; Quintus Bosz 1954:309.
28. Plasschaert 1910:98-99, 109-28; Berkhout 1917:56-57, 62-66; Pfeiffer 1929:59, 66; Gonggryp & Burger 1948:185-91; Jonkers 1987:9-16; Hendrison 1990:16-23.
29. Hecht & Cockburn 1990:35-36; Gonggryp & Burger 1948:152, 191.
30. Schulz 1960:13; Boerboom 1965:2; Vink 1970:15-17; Hendrison 1990:5, 25.
31. Schulz 1960:241; Boerboom 1965:3-5; Vink 1970:59; *Human interference* 1982:12, 19, 26; De Graaf 1986:6-9; Jonkers 1987:14-15; Hendrison 1990:20-29.

32. For a thorough insight in the links between the old experiments and present day practice, see the four recent Wageningen dissertations: De Graaf (1986), Jonkers (1987), Poels (1987), and Hendrison (1990).
33. Berkhout 1903:71-75; Plasschaert 1910:72-75; Berkhout 1917:31-39, 70; Pfeiffer 1929:28, 35-44; Gonggryp & Burger 1948:76, 69, 130-37; Vink 1970:15-19; Hendrison 1990: 17-19.
34. Most of these figures are based on percentages given in the source.
35. Gonggryp & Burger 1948:17, 49, 55, 86, 93-94, 103, 120-23.
36. For 1746-1825 see the section titled "Production of timber and firewood"; for the other years, see Kappler 1881:48; Berkhout 1917:57; Gonggryp & Burger 1948:55, 103, 120; Lindeman 1953:20, 96; Schulz 1960:23; Vink 1970:43.
37. Johns 1988:104; Simmons 1989:175; Hecht & Cockburn 1990:32-38; Whitmore 1990:117.

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REVOLUTION ON THE MIND:  
CUBA, BETWEEN FACT AND FABLE

*To make a world safe for revolution: Cuba's foreign policy.* JORGE I. DOMÍNGUEZ. Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press, 1989. viii + 365 pp. (Cloth US\$ 35.00)

*U.S. – Cuba relations in the 1990s.* JORGE I. DOMÍNGUEZ & RAFAEL HERNÁNDEZ (eds.). Boulder CO: Westview, 1989. ix + 324 pp. (Cloth US\$ 42.00, Paper US\$ 15.95)

*Transformation and struggle: Cuba faces the 1990s.* SANDOR HALEBSKY & JOHN M. KIRK (eds.). with the assistance of Rafael Hernández. New York: Praeger, 1990. xxvi + 291 pp. (Cloth US\$ 45.00, Paper US\$ 17.95)

“A masterpiece of political intrigue” was one description of Jorge Domínguez’ earlier book, *Cuba: order and revolution*; and it is a fitting comment for its sequel foreign policy volume. Domínguez himself opens with: “This is not a book of fiction, yet much of the story seems a fantasy.” The story is how, from 1959 to 1988, Cuban leaders sought “to make a world safe for revolution” and, in the process, that small country Cuba came to have “the foreign policy of a big power.” In his thorough, methodical fashion, Domínguez marshalls a wealth of documentary evidence from varied and conflicting sources, backed with extensive interview material, to paint a “behind the scenes” story of policymakers and their policy.

The first two chapters on the “formative years” and the “security regime” chart the demise of U.S. hegemony, and lead into two subsequent chapters on Cuba’s 1960s challenge to the Soviet Union and the reestablishment of Soviet hegemony. All too often, perceptions of Cuba’s foreign relations stop right there. Domínguez, however, carries his analysis well beyond, and



argues that there is such a thing as a specifically Cuban foreign policy, poised between hegemony and autonomy, militancy and pragmatism. He depicts the gradual building of a foreign strategy grounded on a managed relationship with the Soviet Union, support for revolutionary movements and states, reconstruction of relations with capitalist countries, and diplomacy in the Americas and the Third World. The guiding principle to this strategy, beyond sheer survival, he claims, quoting Castro and other leading Cuban statesmen, has been a deep hostility to the United States and global imperialism, and Cuba has been astute in looking to exploit conflicts between the United States and other countries, including U.S. allies.

Domínguez is perhaps at his best in providing the detail that is the product of meticulous scholarship, as in his accounts of Cuban involvement in Angola, Ethiopia, and Grenada. This proven eye for detail is what informs his many insights into broader policy arenas, whether on Cuba's support for revolutionary movements, some of which he would consider "worthwhile" and some "untrustworthy", Cuba's adroit maneuvering within non-alignment, or Cuba's greater adeptness at handling foreign relations of austerity than abundance when it comes to the West.

The broader frame of reference is understandably missing in the more narrowly focused Domínguez & Hernández edition on U.S.-Cuban relations in the 1990s. What is fabulous about this book, however, and almost to the point of fable, is the engaged juxtaposition of sharply differing treatments of ostensibly the same subject matter, such that it is at times hard to see a) how the subject can possibly be the same and b) what relation either treatment bears to reality as opposed to ideas. Have the authors, like their countries, ultimately become so wrapped up in their perceptions as not to touch ground?

The whole aim behind the project – including a 1988 contributors' workshop in Havana – was to have an exchange of highly differing views, in the hopes of airing substantive differences wherein there might be space for exploring possible convergences. The book pairs U.S. and Cuban scholars writing on five broad topics. Cuban-American Jorge Domínguez and Cuban-Cuban Rafael Hernández provide opening thirty-year overviews of the relationship between Cuba and the United States. They agree that each country's government rests on contrasting interests and values, but feel, in differing degrees, that a "dialogue regime" is possible; with this in mind, each entreats the reader to see the problem from the perspective of the adversary. Gregory Trevorton and Carlos Alzugaray approach national security questions as strategists and paint the security threat the other poses as they see it. While exploring forms of containing conflict, they are both pessimistic in seeing how conflict might be overcome. Michael Clough and

Armando Entralgo & David González focus on southwest Africa and are able to document a success story on a negotiated solution to conflict.

The widest divergences are between Howard Wiarda and Juan Valdés on – significantly – Latin America. Wiarda finds U.S. policy increasing in effectiveness in Latin America and sees Cuba's rigid interpretation of Marxism-Leninism causing it to be increasingly marginal to Latin American affairs. Valdés, on the other hand, believes U.S. policy toward Latin America has continued to fail because it has been unable to address key Latin American concerns and aspirations, whereas Cuba's has been successful because it has. Kenneth Jameson and Alfonso Casanova & Pedro Monreal evidence a different form of divergence on economic relations. Jameson sees these as unimportant to the United States, whereas the Cuban authors take a more micro view of their importance to U.S. firms. Again significantly, the greatest convergence would seem to be on the use of international law, which, James Rowles and Miguel D'Estefano believe, might be a common framework for substantive agreements between the two governments.

Switching from Cuba abroad to Cuba at home, Sandor Halebsky & John Kirk, as in their previous reader, defy narrow definitions of policy and politics. The contributors include established and new scholars, Cuban, North American and one Swede: Max Azicri, Marifeli Pérez-Stable, Carollee Bengelsdorf, Debra Evenson, Tony Platt & Ed McCaughan on the state and citizenry; José Luis Rodríguez, Eugenio R. Balari, Mieke Meurs, Andrew Zimbalist and Claes Brundenius on the economy and development; Lois Smith & Alfred Padula, Frank Fitzgerald, Mayra Espina & Lilia Núñez, Aurelion Alonso, Jill Hamberg and Sarah Santana on society and the social system. All support the ideals of the revolution but are aware also of the dilemmas of transformation and struggle.

Some display greater depth and are more thought-provoking than others, whose contributions remain at best bland, and rather less than "snapshots" – to borrow from the title of one which is in fact something more. It certainly warrants reflection that the 1960s, though perhaps heroic in content, were also anti-democratic in form (as Pérez-Stable and Bengelsdorf point out) and far less legally accountable (see Evenson). Given the obvious parallels with the late 1980s, this inevitably raises questions for today. Also, Meurs asks, is there not a latent conflict between state control and cooperative incentives, efficiency, and productivity? Similarly, Brundenius questions, is private sector activity so intrinsically antithetical to socialism? The extent to which state and family are in conflict, not consonance, needs to be further explored, postulate Smith & Padula. Could Cuba not have handled the housing problem better, one is left wondering after Hamberg's account? And, as Fitzgerald asks, what will be the role of Cuba's new professionals?

On its own description, the Halebsky & Kirk collection attempts to portray a Cuba facing the 1990s with a burst of increased vigor. Its seventeen chapters describe major changes in the economic realm under the rectification campaign, a slow process of liberalization in the political sphere, and a Cuba that in social terms is far better off than any other Latin American country. However, from the vantage point of summer 1991, in the context of severe external and internal dislocation, there is little ground for the kind of "linear" projections perhaps most implicit in the Cuban contributions. Many of the policies of rectification would seem to be spent and, more importantly, to be perceived in this way by a growing body of local opinion. Sooner rather than later, there is the likelihood of renewed pragmatism on the home front to match that already in place in foreign affairs, where there are signs of the socialism being played down, in favor of a more nationalist, Latin American and Caribbean, and Third World bent. Similarly, some form of political pluralism and mixed economy would seem to be in the cards, not least to safeguard some of those much-celebrated social gains.

Given the prolific nature of the authors reviewed, such issues will no doubt be at the heart of their next spate of writing.

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## FORGING A BLACK IDENTITY

*The Rastafarians: sounds of cultural dissonance [revised and updated edition]*. LEONARD E. BARRETT, SR. Boston: Beacon Press, 1988. xviii + 302 pp. (Paper US\$ 11.95)

*Rasta and resistance: from Marcus Garvey to Walter Rodney*. HORACE CAMPBELL. Trenton NJ: Africa World Press, 1987. xiii + 236 pp. (Cloth US\$ 32.95, Paper US\$ 10.95)

*Garvey's children: the legacy of Marcus Garvey*. TONY SEWELL. London: Macmillan Caribbean, 1990. 128 pp. (Paper £ 17.95)

The central theme linking these three titles is the evolution of a black identity among English-speaking Caribbean peoples, in particular Jamaicans. Consequently all three authors cover the two most important historical phenomena in Caribbean black nationalism, namely Garveyism and Rastafari, one focusing on the former and the other two focusing on the latter.

Tony Sewell's *Legacy of Marcus Garvey* is a historical sketch of the power of Garvey's ideas, drawn on documentary as well as original research, including oral testimonies, and presented in a readable and informative style enhanced by well-produced black and white photographs.

The author quite skillfully uses the flashback technique to arouse the interest of his readers. So we follow him to St. Mary's Catholic cemetery in London, descend with him to the vault where Garvey's remains lay unburied for thirty years, and trace the events surrounding the death of "a sad, isolated and broken man" (p. 15). And from there back to the early days in the town of St. Ann's Bay in Jamaica at the turn of the century.

Sewell presents Garvey as a great man who was influenced by three other

great men – Booker T. Washington, Robert Love, and Edward Blyden. But the strength of the book lies in its treatment of those influenced by Garvey, including DuBois, Padmore, and C.L.R. James, three of the most influential architects of black nationalist and working class thought in the twentieth century, all of whom waged battle with Garvey, but in the end succumbed to the power of his ideas.

In Sewell's treatment of Garvey's legacy, the reader may detect a "great men" approach to history. The method he follows is one of uncovering the direct links from Garvey to outstanding leaders such as Malcolm X, Louis Farrakhan, Martin Luther King, Kwame Ture, Kwame Nkrumah, Walter Rodney, Rastafari leaders and the constellation of Reggae stars led by Bob Marley – all of whom have played their role in forging a black identity. The problem, however, is that this is sometimes strained and unconvincing, as when, for example, he discusses the black power movement in the United States or Patrice Lumumba. The link with Garvey would have been made more easily had the approach also included Garvey's impact on popular consciousness.

By contrast Horace Campbell's *Rasta and resistance* views the legacy of Garvey as an essentially cultural phenomenon with deep links to the past and traditions passed on into the future. Rastafari is but the most modern manifestation of a resistance which prevailed during all of slavery, through emancipation and the Morant Bay peasant rebellion, into the twentieth century with Garvey and now Rasta. Campbell thus rejects the categorizations of the Rastafari as escapist or millenarian, arguing instead that the movement is properly understood only from the point of view of cultural resistance. For this, he acknowledges the influence of Cabral. In this respect, the subtitle is misleading. The resistance began in slavery and continues in the metropolises of the West.

The strength of *Rasta and resistance* lies in its original treatment of the Rastafari.

Rastafarians in Jamaica were in the process of creating a popular culture which was based on the spirit of resistance, combined with the good humour and spirit of joy which had become part of the disposition of black peoples of the world (p. 121).

Campbell traces their dreadlocks to the influence of the Mau-Mau warriors of Kenya (the first to adopt them), compares their ganja ritual practices to the cultural role played by the kola nut in West Africa, and surveys the internationalization of Rasta, including a discussion of Rastafari in the Eastern Caribbean. His first-hand account of Bob Marley in Zimbabwe conveys the excitement and amply demonstrates his more general point

that through reggae music the Rastafari were able to express their Afro-centric cultural values.

The author's Marxist orientation prompts him to treat the Rastafari as one manifestation of more general forms of idealism in Jamaican society, and to present "the dualism of positive and negative ideas" (p. 53) in the movement. For example, he seems to counterpose the development of Rastafari race consciousness to the "cohesiveness and organisation of the working class movement" (p. 87), implying that the former arose because the latter failed to materialize. Elsewhere he attacks "bourgeois sociologists and anthropologists" (pp. 5 and 25), erroneously charging the authors of the 1960 University Report with perpetrating the "number one untruth [...] that the 'Rasta was a violent cult' " (p. 92, footnote 46).

The theme of resistance also forms the starting point of Leonard Barrett's *Rastafarians: sounds of cultural dissonance*, which like Campbell's book finds it necessary to treat the reader to the maroon and rebel history of the Jamaicans. To the unfamiliar reader, this background provides a more straightforward and useful introduction. A pity, therefore, that greater care was not exercised against inaccuracies: the journey from Tower Street to Cross Roads is two or three miles, not ten (p. 8); rural housing is not the same as in Beckwith's time in the 1920s (p. 11); the literacy rate fifteen years ago was around sixty percent, not one-third (p. 27); Garvey's alleged statement about looking to Africa for the crowning of a Black King was not made on the eve of his departure for the United States in 1916 (p. 81), but, if at all, after his deportation; and the gold in the Rasta colors is the gold of the Ethiopian, not of the Jamaican national flag (p. 143).

*The Rastafarians: sounds of cultural dissonance* is the twice revised version of the author's 1968 monograph, which was based on his doctoral thesis. Its main value lies in the fact that Barrett has seen and presented the changes that have taken place over two very critical decades in the history of the Rastafari, changes that allow him to develop his central theme, namely that Rastafari is becoming routinized, as cultural dissonance "searches for a consonance in which to resolve itself" (p. 167). Examples of just such a resolution are the impact of the Rastafari on the arts, particularly sculpture and music, the political manipulation of Rastafari symbols, and the inroads which Barrett thought were being made by the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. In this respect, the present revision retains, though in more subdued tones, much of his earlier argument about millenarianism and messianism, based on Anthony Wallace's famous article on revitalization movements. The revised edition also suffers from a kind of time warp: an excessive reliance on the author's earlier source, namely Sam Brown. Barrett also seems unaware of the works of other scholars like Yawney,

Homiak, Philby, Owens, and Chevannes, though, in a discussion of the Rastafari overseas, he mentions Cashmore and Campbell.

One major controversial point advanced by Barrett in the wake of reactions following Selassie's death is the view that to the Rastafari movement "Ethiopianism meant more than Haile Selassie" (p. 254) and that its real center is the holy herb, ganja, under whose influence "the person of Haile Selassie is transformed into that supernatural reality or a cosmic significance befitting a racial redeemer" (p. 254). Most scholars will, I think, find this very strained. Not only is it unwarranted by his earlier discussion (pp. 128-36), but it would be the equivalent of arguing that the real center of Christianity is holy communion, not Jesus.

The theme of black identity which brings all three books together is reinforced by the pedigree with which they are associated. Rex Nettleford writes Sewell's Foreword and receives the dedication of Barrett, while Eusi Kwayana writes the Preface to Campbell's book. The role of these two Caribbean luminaries is an indication that these three books have a deeper intent than as academic historical or sociological disquisitions. They are themselves part of the striving towards and appropriation of that identity, to be used as educational tools. Their non-technical language makes them easy reading.

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## THE CARIBBEAN AND THE WILD COAST

*Suriname: a bibliography, 1980-1989.* JO DERKX & IRENE ROLFES. Leiden, the Netherlands: Department of Caribbean Studies, KITLV/Royal Institute of Linguistics and Anthropology, 1990. x + 297 pp. (Paper NLG 25.00)

*La Caraïbe politique et internationale: bibliographie politologique avec références économiques et socio-culturelles.* MICHEL L. MARTIN. Paris: L'Harmattan, 1990. xvii + 287 pp.

*Suriname.* ROSEMARIJN HOEFTE. Oxford and Santa Barbara CA: Clio Press, 1990. xxx + 229 pp. (Cloth US\$ 45.00)

Although in North American academic circles interest in Suriname (or the Wild Coast, as the area was originally called) has always been marginal, the same cannot be said for the Dutch, for whom the former colony continues to hold an enduring fascination. Not only have the Dutch studied the country's historical beginnings assiduously, but Suriname's controversial relationship with the former mother country assures it a definite place in contemporary social and political thought.

In this context, the bibliography compiled by Derkx and Rolfes, covering the period from 1980 to 1989, continues an existing trend and extends previous work. Indeed, it is the third survey on Suriname published by Leiden's KITLV/Royal Institute of Linguistics and Anthropology within the last twenty years. The previous two were compiled by Gerard A. Nagelkerke; the first, published in 1972, dealt with the 1600s to 1940 and the second, published in 1980, covered 1940 to 1980.

The approximately 2,000 items listed, most of which are in Dutch and English and reflect the KITLV's own holdings, are numbered consecutively



and arranged in a single alphabetical or dictionary file. Included are monographs, periodical literature, chapters in edited volumes, theses, and miscellaneous reports. Monographs add the call number of the KITLV's library for easier retrieval.

Subject access is provided by the index which lists joint authors, editors, and organizations as well. It also has a limited number of cross-references. In addition, the compilers have made available a list of abbreviations and a list of pseudonyms. Lacking however, is a list of indexed journals which would have made this publication even more useful.

A major section of *Suriname: a bibliography, 1980-1989*, is devoted to the literature on Suriname communities in the Netherlands, which makes the volume of added interest to sociologists and cultural anthropologists.

The compilers have tackled a well-defined task and handled it with aplomb. The resulting bibliography represents a major contribution to scholarly research on the region and is highly recommended for academic libraries with Caribbean and/or Latin American collections.

It also serves as a worthwhile companion volume to Rosemarijn Hoefte's *Suriname*, published in 1990 as part of Clio Press' World Bibliographical Series. This series, which is primarily aimed at an English-language audience, provides, in a uniform format, basic historical, economic, political, and social data on all countries in the world. Hoefte's *Suriname* is its 117th volume.

In the thirty-page preface, Hoefte provides the reader with a basic, well-written introduction to the country, emphasizing its peoples, cultures, customs, religions, and social organization. The main text is arranged by title in broad subject categories which, whenever warranted, are sub-divided into smaller sections. The general chapter on Languages, for instance, includes separate divisions on Amerindian, Creole, Sarnami, Surinamese-Javanese, Chinese, and Surinamese-Dutch. In addition, there are chapters on Professional Periodicals, Reference Books, and Bibliographies. Hoefte also tackles such diverse subjects as Overseas Populations, Women's Studies, and the Environment.

Although most of the information is geared towards an English-speaking readership, some recent studies in Spanish, German, French, and Dutch are also listed. In these cases, the original title is accompanied by the appropriate English translation. Unfortunately, no literature in any of Suriname's so-called "native" languages (i.e., Sranan) is mentioned.

Hoefte lists monographs, published theses, periodical articles, and chapters in edited volumes. All 731 entries are numbered consecutively and provide in concise form the following information: title, author, place of publication, publisher, date, number of pages, and illustrations. In the case of

articles, the title of the journal, the volume and/or issue, and pagination are also cited.

Although coverage is selective rather than comprehensive, Hoefte does far more than simply list sources. Citations are accompanied by informative annotations of at least a paragraph, written in a clear, succinct, style. As a minor point, some of the annotations border on the excessive and would have served the same purpose if they had been shorter.

The index lists authors, titles, and subjects in a single alphabetical file and refers the user back to the number of the particular bibliographic entry. Ample cross-references are given throughout. *Suriname* is an indispensable tool for graduate and undergraduate students alike.

Taken together, Derkx & Rolfes and Hoefte have succeeded in creating a complete, and highly readable, account of contemporary Suriname bibliography.

In contrast to these two solid and well-documented works, Michel L. Martin's *La Caraïbe politique et internationale: bibliographie politologique avec références économiques et socio-culturelles, 1980-1988* simply does not fit into the same league. Not only did Martin fail to define his subject matter clearly, he chose to cover the entire Caribbean archipelago (as well as Bermuda, Belize, and the three Guianas) using highly unruly parameters. Although the focus is political, by electing to include "some" economic and social references, he unnecessarily opened himself up to criticism.

By arbitrarily selecting only a few items on, for example, the Cuban presence in the United States, Martin has opened a can of worms. As every Miamian would argue, one simply cannot dispose of this issue by mentioning only a partial list of available sources! It would have been wiser to steer clear of this volatile and controversial issue and stick to strictly political concerns. Indeed, the amount of literature on the subject of Caribbean communities abroad certainly warrants a separate volume.

The other major problem encountered with this volume is more technical and concerns the absence of an index. As it is, the text has been divided into four main sections, three of which have been further sub-divided by country or region (I. General citations on the Caribbean.- II. Citations on the dependent territories.- III. Citations on the sovereign states.- IV. Periodicals, documents and serials). Books (and articles) are listed alphabetically under each. The Table of Contents is the only access point to the main body of literature.

This arrangement leaves much to be desired. For example, Latortue's "Neoslavery in the cane fields" is to be found under *Relations internationales*, a subsection of the chapter on Haiti. For one unfamiliar with the book's contents, this particular entry will forever be inaccessible. In works orga-

nized along these lines, both an author index and a subject index are truly indispensable tools.

Hidden in the multiple sub-categories languish many gems – works which hitherto have not been widely publicized (most notably the many fine French references) and which have now been made available to the general public for the first time. In addition, coverage of some areas, such as the Netherlands Antilles, is very spotty with only the most general sources listed. Martin did make an attempt to translate the exotic foreign (Dutch, Russian, etc.) titles into English, which greatly facilitates the task of the U.S. researcher. Also useful is the attached list of journals.

In conclusion, the two bibliographies on Suriname clearly represent significant contributions to the existing scholarship on a little known country; Martin's ambitious project is not quite up to par and, in this bibliographer's view, would have benefited from some additional work.

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## BOOK REVIEWS

*First encounters: Spanish explorations in the Caribbean and the United States, 1492-1570.* JERALD T. MILANICH & SUSAN MILBRATH (eds.). Gainesville FL: Florida Museum of Natural History & University Presses of Florida, 1989. 221 pp. (Cloth US\$ 44.95, Paper US\$ 16.95)

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In these days of modern publishing, when it is important to write for both popular and professional audiences to get a book widely distributed, *First encounters* meets that requirement, with an emphasis on the former rather than the latter. Once the reader accepts the popular emphasis of this book, it is quite enjoyable reading for historical developments relating to sixteenth-century Spanish contact with the New World. However, the title could as easily have been "First Europeans," as the Amerindians of the sixteenth century, being the "encountered" peoples, are only marginally discussed in this book, primarily from observing European perspectives.

As the ninth publication of the Ripley P. Bullen Monographs in Anthropology and History series, this volume consists of one introductory chapter, nine chapters on early Spanish explorations in the southeastern United States, and three chapters on Spanish explorations in the Caribbean. The layout of the book is pleasing to the eye, with extensive color photographs and drawings, all accompanied by lengthy explanatory captions. This surely relates to the fact that this book accompanied a 1989 traveling exhibit of the Florida Museum of Natural History, also entitled *First encounters*. There-

fore, it is not surprising that most of the authors are also associated, either by direct employment or previous graduate studies, to the Florida Museum of Natural History.

The introductory chapter, by Jerald Milanich and Susan Milbrath, has a well-explained, but not overly detailed, chronology of events leading to the formation of an Iberian power base, by King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella, which eventually became Spain. These developments are then tied to Columbus's quest to explore a passage to the East Indies, with a brief outline of his four voyages. However, the continuation of this chapter reveals the true focus of the book, with the majority of the texts about the southeastern United States, called La Florida, and only superficial discussion of explorations in the Caribbean.

William Keegan's chapter about the first landfall of Columbus gives good cross-references to various "first landfall" theories by other authors. He argues that the ambiguous translations from the earliest documents are one of the key problems in locating Columbus's landfall. Yet, by using geographic and archaeological evidence from the Bahamas, Keegan concludes that Watling Island, today renamed San Salvador, was the first landfall of Columbus in 1492.

The second chapter related to the Caribbean, by Kathleen Deagan, discusses the search for La Navidad, Columbus's 1492 settlement on Hispaniola (Haiti). The operative word here is "search," as locating the site through historical documentation and local amateur archaeological research is a large part of this essay. Nonetheless, this is one of the few chapters in the book to address the subject of Amerindian contexts prior to and during early Spanish contact. Based on archaeological excavations of a large Taino-Arawak village at En Bas Saline, it is suggested that the Spanish settlement of La Navidad was associated, due to the presence of artifactual, and particularly faunal and paleobotanical, evidence at this Amerindian site. Although the evidence is not substantial enough for Deagan to conclude that the fortress of La Navidad has been found, she does believe that the site of En Bas Saline is a strong candidate for the location.

Eugene Lyon's chapter about Columbus's favorite ship, *Niña*, is a well-documented and interesting account of the physical ship itself. However, the chapter seems to be misplaced in this book, as it does not really fit with the historical development themes of the other papers.

The last chapter related to the Caribbean, by Charles Ewen and Maurice Williams, describes the archaeology of Puerto Real, an early sixteenth-century Spanish town located nearby Deagan's study area at En Bas Saline on Hispaniola. By using historical documentary evidence, combined with extensive archaeological excavations, they outline characteristics of an

early Spanish village. Two important contributions of this chapter are the identification of internal settlement distribution patterns of masonry structures, which gives an indication of town planning at the time, and a quality photograph of majolica artifacts, which unfortunately come from a private collection rather than their own controlled excavations.

Chapter Six begins with the first of several studies about Hernando de Soto's 1539-43 expedition through the southeastern United States. Written by Charles Hudson, Chester DePratter, and Marvin Smith, it gives a detailed account of the various historical reconstructions of de Soto's route, many of which are based on later expeditions through the area by Tristán de Luna (1559-61) and Juan Pardo (1566-68); it is well organized, with historical documentation and supporting archaeological and physical anthropological evidence. An important aspect of this chapter is that the authors deal, albeit briefly, with issues of the effect of contact on indigenous Amerindian peoples.

Jeffrey Mitchem's chapter describes artifactual evidence of the Narváez (1528) and de Soto expeditions in Florida. Mitchem provides some valuable photographs and site locational evidence relating to sixteenth-century Spanish artifacts. These data are quite useful for professional readers, particularly archaeologists.

Like the previous chapter, Charles Ewen's focuses on the artifactual evidence from the sixteenth century. He uses the artifacts from the Martin site in north Florida to confirm that site as de Soto's 1539-40 winter camp location.

Chapter Nine follows the Tristán de Luna expedition of 1559-61. Written by Charles Hudson, Marvin Smith, Chester DePratter, and Emilia Kelley, it has a great deal of repetition of historical sequences from earlier chapters about various expeditions. However, there are new data presented which relate to the de Luna expedition observations of impacts on the Amerindians after de Soto had passed through the area.

The most thorough account of an Amerindian society during the contact period is presented in Chapter Ten by Marvin Smith. Smith uses the Coosa chiefdom society of the southeastern Appalachians for his example of demographic collapse and political disintegration as a result of contact with two Spanish expeditions in the sixteenth century. This chapter balances historical documents with archaeological evidence in such a way that his arguments become clear and reasonable. Smith goes beyond a simple assertion that diseases killed massive numbers of Amerindians to explore population movements as a result of people fleeing diseased areas, and the subsequent ramifications of reduced and redistributed populations on political systems. Another important contribution of this chapter is the observation that the

effect of culture change among the Amerindians (as a result of contact with the Spanish) was not acculturation, but rather deculturation or the loss of cultural elements. Smith suggests that the Amerindians were not becoming hispanicized, but were simply losing aspects of their own culture. This is certainly one of the strongest chapters of the book.

In Chapter Eleven, Eugene Lyon does find a subject of relevant application for this book. His chapter documents the plans of Pedro Menéndez for developing the entirety of La Florida for the Spanish Crown. Lyon demonstrates his skill as an historian with the detailed quality of this chapter, which shows that many of the early plans for the region were never realized.

For a perspective of lifeways in early Spanish La Florida and specifically at St. Augustine, Edward Chane and Kathleen Deagan have compiled an interesting review in Chapter Twelve. Using primarily archaeological data, they make several important comments relating to social life in an early Spanish community, particularly in regard to genetic and cultural mixing of Spaniards and Amerindians, as well as to status indicators in material cultural remains. One small inconsistency, however, is to be pointed out in this chapter, when the authors refer to the wattle and daub construction technique as of the Old World (p. 178), after Ewen (in Chapter Eight) had previously noted it for the pre-Columbian Apalachee (p. 117). Although this construction technique could well have been used in both regions, multiple origin potential should have been indicated.

The final chapter of the book, by Susan Milbrath, is an interesting popular review of early European artistic representations of the New World and its people. Milbrath has presented a well-documented description of European biases, and the adaptive nature of fantastic representation in European art. This chapter is particularly well suited for the closing of the book, as it challenges readers to re-evaluate their own perspectives of Amerindians and how Europeans recorded them.

With a strong focus on the southeastern United States, and only a few references to the Caribbean (Haiti and the Bahamas), this book is clearly of more interest to North American than Caribbean readers. Indeed, this should be expected from a book written to accompany a museum exhibit traveling only in the United States. Overall, *First encounters* is enjoyable reading for the general public, with some information useful to professional historians and archaeologists.

*The Libro de las profecías of Christopher Columbus: an en face edition.* DELANO C. WEST & AUGUST KLING, translation and commentary. Gainesville FL: University of Florida Press, 1991. x + 274 pp. (Cloth US\$ 49.95)

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When all the biographies, picture books based on TV shows, museum catalogues, and encyclopedias issued to commemorate the Quincentenary are assessed, this important document, issued in its original languages with facing translation, should stand high at the top of the list. Every library with any pretensions to scholarship needs a copy. Until August Kling undertook this translation the text was inaccessible, except to a multilingual scholar who could locate one of the 560 copies of the *Reccolta* of 1892-94. Delano West has contributed three introductory essays on Columbus's intellectual and cultural background, his piety and faith, and the history and meaning of the *Libro*, which are alone well worth the volume's price.

Upon his return to Spain in chains during November 1500, after his third voyage, Columbus compiled this notebook of biblical passages, plus theological glosses and a hodgepodge of ancient and medieval quotes and original poems. He worked on it only a few months, but evidently it had been on his mind for quite a long time. The text was intended to be sent off with a long letter to Ferdinand and Isabella, for the purpose of inspiring them to finance a fourth trip, which would fulfill various millenarian prophecies. Columbus believed that the passages he (and those who assisted him) assembled proved he had indeed fulfilled ancient prophecies about uncovering unknown islands and mainland, and that further explorations would lead to the discovery of Solomon's gold mines in the Indies. Columbus would thereby provide Ferdinand and Isabella the means to conquer the Holy Land, rebuild Solomon's Temple, convert all humans to Christianity, and so prepare for the much awaited end of the world, which he calculated was coming in a mere 150 years.

It has become traditional for scholars, embarrassed by the theological writings of Columbus's later years, to write the *Libro* off as the ranting of an increasingly disturbed personality. Yet, by placing the focus on Columbus's mystic side this edition of the *Libro* provides us with a salutary antidote to the notion that his was ever primarily a scientific and rational mind. In his youth he believed that the Holy Ghost spoke to him, saying his name would be proclaimed throughout the world. From the time he arrived at the court



of Ferdinand and Isabella he identified himself as one with a mission – a “man sent by God” – although this claim was somewhat less unusual than the editor believes. After all, it is about as common in late Medieval Europe to find men (like Luther, to name one) who were sure God spoke through them as it now is to encounter fervent apostles of free enterprise in Republican administrations.

The *Libro* also solves one of the puzzles of Columbian scholarship by demonstrating exactly what Columbus offered to his listeners by way of “proof” that his Great Enterprise would succeed. As early as a marginal note which can be dated to 1481 the eschatological themes are already there, although no doubt they gained fuller development as disappointment followed disappointment. The *Libro* suggests that Columbus promoted, through the liberal use of Biblical references, his quests for distant “islands of the sea,” “lands far off,” and nations “who have not heard” the gospel. One of Columbus’s principal spiritual motivations in roaming the world is, unfortunately, not provable given the present state of the manuscript. Just at the point where the *Libro* first mentions the Franciscan Joachimite tradition of the Three Ages, pages have been ripped out by an unknown hand, possibly to protect Columbus or his descendants from the charge of holding a heretical position.

Granted the enormous importance of the *Libro* to Columbian scholarship, the text proves to be a typically disordered Medieval grab bag of random quotes, given form by only the flimsiest of classifications. With, for example, twenty-six unfocused biblical selections under the vague heading of “islands,” we would today call this a raw data base. Items are included which seem to have nothing whatsoever to do with his mission, such as “Psalm 150 (in its entirety: “Let every spirit praise the Lord. Amen.”) Although West assures us it was unusual for a layman like Columbus to read the Bible with such careful exegesis, it is difficult to tell how much of the compilation or its intellectual apparatus actually came from his mind, since key passages are in the handwriting of Father Gaspar Gorricio and others.

West finds no evidence for a converso interpretation of the holy scriptures, thus refuting Madariaga and others who look for Jewish roots in the explorer’s heritage. Columbus is, however, broad-minded: “I believe that the Holy Spirit works among Christians, Jews and Muslims, and among men of every faith, not merely among the learned, but also among the uneducated” (p. 150). Another of many surprises found in his text.

*From Spaniard to Creole: the archaeology of cultural formation at Puerto Real, Haiti.* CHARLES R. EWEN. Tuscaloosa AL: University of Alabama Press, 1991. xvi + 155 pp. (Paper US\$ 15.95)

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This is to date the only publication in print on the historical archaeology of one of Spain's earliest New World settlements. In this, his first book, Ewen clearly describes research at Puerto Real, occupied circa 1503-1605 and located on Hispaniola's north coast (fifteen kilometers east of Cap Haitien). Its major strength lies in a theoretical approach whereby the author attempts an analysis of a too-often neglected aspect of culture contact, that of the Spaniards' adaptation to the New World. This comes in the wake of acculturation studies which have ignored a crucial factor in such contact: the fact that *both* colonizer and colonized exchanged cultural values, creating a creole environment.

Ewen provides a thorough and interesting background to Spanish New World involvement, touching on European political events, Spain's economy and society, and early colonization efforts. His account of Puerto Real's history explains the change in 1520 from Amerindian to African labor used for the expanding hide industry, and how the port became a transportation backwater. Illegal trade ensured the town's survival, but various hardships and Spain's dissatisfaction with smuggling reduced her interest in the settlement's future and others like it, culminating in the depopulation of the western third of the island by 1605 and subsequent French involvement.

The author describes the remarkable re-discovery of Puerto Real by a missionary who encouraged Haitians to show him the "treasures" they found, including a sixteenth-century four-maravedi piece. Archaeological fieldwork in 1979-82 and 1984-85 was sponsored by local, regional, and American organizations, with due thanks being given to the hard working Haitian site crew. Ewen explains the survey techniques and excavations, concentrating on the 1984-85 field season. This was designed to determine patterns in the material culture that reflect Spanish creolization, the central theme being to test new data with hypotheses posed in Deagan's research on eighteenth-century St. Augustine in Florida. Deagan concluded that while there was a conservatism in maintaining Spanish elements in "socially visible" objects like clothing and religious articles, acculturation occurred between native female and Spanish male elements which had a "low visibil-

ity" status, for example in the area of subsistence. Puerto Real is an ideal site for comparison, since a predominantly male colonizing group came into contact with a normal sex distribution of Amerindians.

The most recent excavation involved a "high-status" occupation area of the late period, the material remains of which could be compared with earlier excavations of "high-status" early period settlement (the 1550 cut-off date falling midway in the site's occupation with certain ceramics unavailable before this date). I would have preferred to see a comparison between perhaps earlier stronger Amerindian and later stronger African influences on the creolizing of the Spaniards. From this we might better understand whether we can detect stages in the acculturation process over this brief period.

As Ewen clearly states, ceramics associated with "low social visibility" food preparation and storage activities are the most abundant artifacts of their type at Puerto Real, and crucial here for understanding the acculturation of Spaniard to creole. For reference purposes ceramic illustrations would have been more useful with scales and color photographs. Unfortunately it is unclear where maiolica (not "majolica") types were made, and whether there is any concrete evidence for identifying certain "utilitarian wares" as European, with others being classified as "colono- and aboriginal wares" of New World origin. In order to better comprehend which ceramics are indeed creole ware, we must begin to determine provenience for clay sources, to understand the *chaîne opératoire* in the production, use, and discard of those ceramics, because it is, for instance, erroneous in many cases to identify ceramic origins solely on the basis of technology and form. The assumption made regarding marks found on some maiolica itself deserves further investigation. Try scratching through a fired lead-tin glaze ... it is nearly impossible!

Despite this lack of clarity on certain points, Ewen has provided researchers with data for comparative testing of material from regional sites colonized by different cultural groups. He concludes that creole influences were discovered in food-preparation activities and in diet, but not in regard to status-related artifacts, or architectural style and interior furnishings. This result is important for improving our understanding of cultures in contact, and this book is to be highly recommended for its theoretical approach, one which historians and archaeologists alike ought to consider.

*Intervention in the Caribbean: the Dominican Crisis of 1965.* BRUCE PALMER, Jr. Lexington KY: University Press of Kentucky, 1989. (Paper US\$ 23.00)

*Military crisis management: U.S. intervention in the Dominican Republic, 1965.* HERBERT G. SCHOONMAKER. Westport CT: Greenwood Press, 1990. 152 pp. (Cloth US\$ 37.95)

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In this post-Vietnam period of U.S. military victories – Grenada, Panama, and now Iraq – it is good to read of an earlier U.S. victory: the invasion of the Dominican Republic in late April 1965. Like the other three, it had one great virtue: very few American casualties.

General Bruce Palmer, author of *Intervention in the Caribbean*, is well qualified to tell this story: he was the commander of the U.S. troops in the Dominican Republic. He writes well and is obviously an intelligent, sophisticated man.

Unfortunately, he chooses to tell not a story but a fairy tale, in which the dark underside is conveniently swept under a bridge. He avoids controversy and provides a highly selective, cleansed account. His is an uplifting tale, to be read to earnest cadets at campfires – a tale in which all the Americans are good, and the “kindness and generosity” (p. 121) of the U.S. troops is met by “the childlike faith [of the Dominican people] in the belief that the United States could accomplish anything and make things right again” (p. 56). The others – those who are on the wrong side – are not good. But even here, General Palmer is restrained, severe, but more in sorrow than anger.

Beyond a few generalities, and the occasional insightful remark, General Palmer does not deal with the policy side of the story. As he points out, it was the civilians who ran the show, and he was often in the dark – “left to fly by the seat of my pants” (p. 88). As for military matters, he is discreet and, when necessary, ready to rewrite the script. For example, he states that on June 15 the outnumbered and outgunned rebels attacked the American troops that encircled them in the capital. “In all, it was a disaster for [rebel leader] Caamaño,” he muses. “His best troops had been badly mauled.” There is nothing wrong with Palmer’s account, except one thing: it was not the rebels who attacked the entrenched positions of the far stronger foe – it was the Americans who attacked the rebels. Palmer’s rendition reminds me

of a Soviet professor who assured me, with equal equanimity, that it was Finland that had attacked the Soviet Union in December 1939.

Similarly, in describing the "loyalist" assault against the rebels in the northern part of the capital in mid-May 1965, Palmer blandly repeats the official story that U.S. troops remained neutral while the battle raged for several days – an untruth that has been fully exposed by dozens of journalists who witnessed the onslaught.

In September 1965, the provisional government of Héctor García Godoy was installed. This was, Palmer says, a fair negotiated settlement, and he proceeds to extoll the "historic role" of Ambassador Ellsworth Bunker who had accomplished "an unparalleled feat of diplomacy in bringing about a peaceful and democratic resolution to the conflict" (p. 136). This fair and democratic settlement left one side (the antirebel or "loyalist" side) in control of all the senior military positions, that is, in control of the armed forces and the police; it was, as events would demonstrate, not a fair settlement but a negotiated surrender. As is amply evident to anyone who reads the minutes of the talks between Bunker and the rebels, this settlement was achieved not by the skill of the American negotiator, but by the crushing military superiority of the American troops.

This rosy account of the negotiations and fulsome praise of Bunker follow a by-now well established tradition. But Palmer devotes unusual attention to an intriguing incident that occurred during the life of the provisional government. At 9:30 a.m. on December 19, 1965, several hundred Dominican troops, supported by tanks and cannons, attacked a group of one hundred rebel leaders who had congregated in the Hotel Matum in Santiago, the country's second city. The unequal battle lasted for eight hours, and the attackers were unable to storm the hotel, despite their superior armament. Finally, at 5:30 p.m., U.S. troops enforced a cease-fire.

In reporting the incident, the American press did not ask why it had taken so long to impose a cease-fire – a question that more perceptive Dominicans posed (see for instance *Ahora*, no. 114, January 3, 1966, pp. 6-22 and 37). The rebels had immediately informed the provisional president of their predicament, and García Godoy had called the American military headquarters at once, asking them to intervene (as García Godoy readily acknowledged when I interviewed him in 1968). Why then the long delay? When I asked General Palmer in 1977, his memory, excellent until that moment, suddenly clouded: he could not remember the details. In *Intervention in the Caribbean*, Palmer deals with the details – in a fashion – and concludes: "no one analyzing the actual sequence of events can make a persuasive case for deliberate stalling or delay in reacting" (p. 128). Word of the attack "did not reach my headquarters until after twelve noon" (p.127) – that is, three hours

after García Godoy had called, and well after everybody else in the capital had learned of the attack (telephones were working). By car, it takes about two hours to reach Santiago from the capital – and the Americans used helicopters to move their troops. Why, then, the delay? No doubt, patriotic Americans will believe Palmer's account, but the poverty of his defense fuels the suspicion that the Americans connived in an attempt to destroy the rebel leadership and only imposed the cease fire when it was obvious that the "loyalists" were unable to do the job and that to delay any longer might have alerted even the American press.

Unlike General Palmer, Herbert Schoonmaker, author of *Military crisis management*, was not a participant in the Dominican crisis. Why he wants to describe it, I do not know. Except for a few pages on air operations (pp. 67-76) he has absolutely nothing new to say, and he repeats what others have said without flair or insight. In his preface Schoonmaker thanks, among others, the staff of the Johnson Library in Austin "for the extensive use of their facilities." The Johnson Library does indeed house thousands of recently declassified documents on the Dominican intervention, but judging by Schoonmaker's failure to use any of them, he must have waltzed by the library without stopping. Had he dealt as swiftly with the Dominican crisis as he did with the Johnson Library, one more useless book would have been spared us and several trees would still be standing.

*War, cooperation, and conflict: the European possessions in the Caribbean, 1939-1945.* FITZROY ANDRÉ BAPTISTE. Westport CT: Greenwood Press, 1988. xiv + 351 pp. (Cloth US\$ 39.95)

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Did you know that Aruba-Curaçao-Venezuela ranked as the largest supplier of oil to Hitler's Germany in the late 1930s? Or that "in 1942-1943 a 150-mile strip around Trinidad suffered the greatest concentration of shipping losses experienced anywhere during World War II"? These and other facts are to be found in this detailed historical study by Fitzroy Baptiste (see pp. 30, 144, respectively). The book describes the Caribbean's role in World War II, including the formulation of the Anglo-American Destroyers-Bases Agreement, the Allied occupation of the Netherlands Antilles, and the

Vichy/anti-Vichy tensions as they affected the French Caribbean possessions. The work is accompanied by detailed illustrations of command areas, naval districts, force organization, and maps of various war zones. This is a specialized text of primary interest to historians. It will also delight military strategists as the author gives lengthy details about the Allied and German war plans, plans with code names such as ABC-1, Asterisk, Barbarossa, Bungalow, Rainbow, and Torch. In case the reader gets confused, an index of code names is provided at the beginning of the book. However, there is also insight to be gained by the non-historian who reads this study, even though it may not be readily apparent. The key lies in clarifying the main theme of the work which, unfortunately, the author hints at more than he specifies.

The author's style is to delve right into his subject without any particular mention of the main focus of the work. Halfway through, however, the reader realizes that this is not simply a study of the events surrounding the war in the Caribbean. In fact, the concluding sentence is a good guide to the theme of the work: Baptiste notes, "the contemporary reality in the Caribbean area is that of United States preponderance of power and influence. The events of World War II discussed in this study greatly enhance our understanding of this state of affairs" (p. 220). In other words, the work can best be understood as a chronicle of the rise of American power in the Caribbean. As the author states, the Destroyers-Bases agreement was the "culmination of the United States' quest for a lodgement in the British possessions of the Western Hemisphere, a quest that dated back to World War I" (p. 60). The United States completed its quest for national and hemispheric security (dating back to the enunciation of the Monroe Doctrine) by various inter-American deals, including (with respect to the Caribbean) deals with Venezuela and Brazil, and somewhat forced agreements with the Netherlands. Its actions with respect to the French Antilles are perhaps the most interesting: The United States first attempted unsuccessfully to preserve its neutrality by collaborating with Vichy elements; later it ensured the collapse of the Vichy regime in the French Antilles; and after the war it was instrumental in preventing the takeover of the Gaullists in French Guiana, Martinique, and Guadeloupe. Recognition of this theme of American intrigue and power adds strength to the book: the author would have done well to note this in an introductory chapter.

Although this is not a theoretical work, important insights can be gained from it by those who deal with contemporary international events. For one, the author highlights the role of resources in the war diplomacy: Trinidad's oil, the Aruba-Curaçao-Venezuela oil connection, and the bauxite resources of Suriname and Guyana were all central to both Allied and

German decisionmaking. For example, in justifying its occupation of Suriname, the U.S. government stated clearly that it was for the purpose of "cooperation with the Armed Forces of the Netherlands in insuring adequate protection to the Suriname bauxite mines" which then furnished sixty percent of the requirements of the aluminum industry in the United States (p. 121). The consideration also applied to the rest of the hemisphere. Baptiste affirms that "Western Hemisphere resources made a critical contribution to the outcome of World War II." These included "Mexican oil, antimony, lead, zinc, and mercury; Cuban nickel; and Brazilian bauxite, quartz, mica, and tantalite; [...] Venezuelan oil and cinchona. It was not by accident that those countries were the focal point of United States and Allied interest in 1942-1943" (p. 167). Today, as demonstrated in the recent Persian Gulf war, resources continue to constitute a major basis for the security decision-making of the more powerful countries.

The book also provides several good case studies of foreign policy decisionmaking. In the Netherlands, for example, the monopoly of decision-making by an inner cabinet provoked tensions between the included and the excluded, particularly the excluded minister of colonies (p. 123). Baptiste also provides much material about what international relations theorists term the "operational environment" – all the geopolitical, internal, and international factors that affected final decisions, including some rather fine points. For example, Dutch-U.S. negotiations were impeded by Dutch fears of Venezuelan intentions towards the Netherlands Antilles; but the cession of Patos Island to Venezuela was speeded up by the need for British-Venezuelan cooperation. Finally, the author does a good job of highlighting the important roles played by Roosevelt and Churchill in making the Anglo-American bases agreement possible. Roosevelt is more or less adamant, Churchill bends, but all is justified by global strategic and political considerations (p. 100).

Overall, this is an extremely well researched and detailed work on a rather specialized subject but one that has implications for the study of contemporary events. The reader will have to exercise patience in going through the initial chapters: the theme is unclear at the beginning and the text is bogged down by details. However, patience is rewarded by a series of fascinating details from Chapter 8 ("The Conclusion of the Leased Bases Agreement") to the end.



*The Dutch Caribbean: prospects for democracy.* BETTY SECOC-DAHLBERG (ed.). New York: Gordon and Breach, 1990. xix + 333 pp. (Cloth US\$ 67.00)

*Europe and the Caribbean.* PAUL SUTTON (ed.). London: Macmillan Caribbean, 1991. xii + 260 pp. (Paper £ 10.95)

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Up to the 1980s the Dutch Caribbean ranked as a region largely excluded and neglected in the social sciences. This apparent disregard had to be attributed not so much to scholars from the region itself or from the Netherlands, but particularly to their colleagues from the Anglophone, French, and Hispanic parts of the Western Hemisphere. However, this lack of interest was not without reason. After all, Suriname, the Netherlands Antilles, and Aruba enjoyed the blessings of free trade and parliamentary democracy and were heavily supported financially by their former mother country. In comparison to neighboring Caribbean states, life in the Dutch-speaking territories seemed uneventful and relatively light-hearted.

For many scholars professional interest in the Dutch Caribbean was aroused only when the military in Suriname executed a coup d'état in 1980 and afterwards drew their country into a series of unexpected catastrophies. With respect to the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba, the economic crisis of the past decade and the growing political complexities characterizing the relations with the Netherlands removed the barriers for scholarly attention.

Emphasizing this growing interest, editor Betty Sedoc-Dahlberg presents *The Dutch Caribbean: prospects for democracy* as the "first synthesis of this area available to a wide audience." It is true that it is the first single publication in English devoted to this region, but to be clear from the start it is not a synthesis and one can argue about whether all parts of it will appeal to a wide audience. The volume is characterized best as a collection of fourteen essays divergent in length, quality, perspective, and approach. Four of the essays deal with Suriname, seven with the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba, and the remaining three with subjects only marginally touching upon the countries mentioned.

The contributions on Suriname differ from the articles on the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba particularly as far as analysis, depth, and precision are concerned. This is chiefly due to the fact that these chapters are not the products of new research. Moreover all three authors generally draw their

data from English-language and not from Dutch or Surinamese sources. The two essays by Sedoc-Dahlberg mainly repeat well-known facts and do not offer any significant new explanation or interpretation. Tony Thorndike's contribution attempts to periodize the "revolutionary process" following the military takeover in 1980; unfortunately, the results are not satisfying since he often fails to document correctly the chronology of events. Finally, Gary Brana-Shute produces a well-written but rather short and anecdotal account of U.S.-Surinamese relations in the 1980s.

More articulate and definitely focusing on contemporary issues are the contributions on the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba. Although one misses separate chapters on Saba and St. Eustatius, the four other islands are treated extensively. Robertico Croes and Lucita Moenir Alam's view on Aruba's struggle for freedom within the Netherlands Antilles, Fabian Badajo's portrait of St. Maarten, and Peter Verton's overview of Dutch decolonization politics following World War II are particularly convincing. The three essays not only examine carefully the political and economic factors that have a major influence on the future of the islands, but they do so in a most accessible way. Given the intricacy of the problems discussed this is a remarkable achievement.

The major shortcoming of *The Dutch Caribbean* is its apparent lack of editorial care. This is illustrated by the fact that the reader has to do without a coherent introduction explaining the purpose of the book and a concluding chapter putting the analyses and observations into perspective. There is a sort of introduction stating that the volume's three objectives are to contribute to a better understanding of the area "in regard to the future of democracy," to provide a potential audience with a selection of "contemporary issues in the Dutch Caribbean," and "to aid in the laborious process of regional integration." However, these goals share an exceptional vagueness and commonness; they are also not systematically used by the contributors as points of reference. For this reason the book cannot claim any homogeneity. The heterogeneous nature of the volume is compounded by the many textual repetitions and overlaps (compare, for example, the two essays by Peter Verton) and a great number of spelling mistakes.

This is in marked contrast with the carefulness underlying *Europe and the Caribbean*. There can be no doubt that editor Paul Sutton prepared his project with a firm editorial conception, instructing his colleagues, and writing a clear introduction as well as a sound final paragraph. Anticipating the integration of Europe towards a single market and the Quincentennial of Columbus' arrival in the New World, Sutton's object is to present a comprehensive picture of the European presence in the Caribbean and to comment on its expected development in the near future. In order to meet these goals

he has divided his volume into three parts. In the first part the role of the "traditional colonial powers," Britain, France, and the Netherlands, is examined. In the second part the emergence of the "new actors," the E.C., Spain, and the Soviet Union, is studied. In the third part the investigations focus on the reaction to the evolving European presence by the Caribbean states themselves, the neighboring Latin American countries, and the United States.

With respect to the "traditional colonial powers," the authors conclude that the forces of continuity have remained strong and that it is not to be expected that in the near future the three states will deviate considerably from their current policy. In this context the French policy of *départementalisation* is viewed as the most stable of the three. The reason is simple: this policy still has not met with serious resistance either in France or in the Départements d'Outre-Mer.

The former "special relationship" between Britain and the Commonwealth Caribbean has gradually been transformed into a relationship based on geopolitical interests. Practically, this means that Britain is now chiefly concerned with combatting drug trafficking and guaranteeing security. More than before this shift of accent has forced London to take into account Washington's maneuvers in the Caribbean area.

The smallest of the "traditional colonial powers," the Netherlands, has great problems arriving at a sound decolonization policy for the Netherlands Antilles and Aruba. Fearing social unrest, mass migration to the Netherlands, growing financial costs, and the possible repetition of the "Surinamese model decolonization," The Hague feels itself trapped into a multitude of often contradictory arguments. The origins, weight, and meaning of these arguments are explained well by Rosemarijn Hoefte and Gert Oostindie.

According to Sutton the emergence of the E.C., Spain, and the Soviet Union in the Caribbean did not challenge the traditional configuration of European power in the Caribbean. Indeed the three "new actors" have extended European influence and diversified the pattern of European involvement in the region, but their importance should not be overestimated. With the approaching integration of Europe, "the best days" of the E.C. still seem on their way. Spain's commitment to the Caribbean is based merely on a series of bilateral relations with her former colonies rather than on any coherent policy, whereas the socio-economic weakness of the Soviet Union for the present will prevent its influence from becoming more than minimal. The essays on Spain by Jean Grugel and on the Soviet Union by Peter Shearman rank among the finest in the volume.

For many Commonwealth Caribbean states the focus of attention has

recently turned from Britain to the E.C., the United States, and Canada. For them – as Andrés Serbin makes clear – the Latin American states do not play any significant role. Mistrust and misjudgment – sharpened by an outspoken socio-cultural legacy – prevail in Caribbean-Latin American relations. The only country able to act as Europe's counter-weight and at the same time as its geopolitical partner appears to be the United States. The complex web of political ties between the United States and Europe from the early nineteenth century onward is skillfully analyzed by Michael Erisman. His fascinating essay concentrates on four themes: manifest destiny and U.S. global prestige; anti-communism and containment; human rights and democracy; and American perspectives on developmental models.

In his concluding paragraph Sutton argues that Europe will maintain an active presence in the Caribbean well beyond the year 2000. Those interested in Caribbean politics should hope that Sutton and his colleagues will still report on those developments at that time.

*Autoritarismo y democracia en la política dominicana.* ROSARIO ESPINAL.  
San José, Costa Rica: Ediciones CAPEL, 1987. 208 pp. (Paper n.p.)

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Political practice has been changing in Latin America and the Caribbean the last decennium, and so has political science. While until recently research about political change was colored by strong moral and ideological overtones, it has now taken a more pragmatic, analytical stance. Few political scientists feel a particular liking for authoritarian regimes, but instead of showing this preference, they try to explain the emergence and logic of authoritarianism in Latin America. This attitude which is heavily influenced by the work of political scientists like Guillermo O'Donnell and Manuel Antonio Garretón is also very clear in Rosario Espinal's study on the Dominican Republic.

Modern political history of the Dominican Republic is determined by the long regime of the family dictatorship of Rafael Leonidas Trujillo (1930-61). Under the iron grip of the dictator Dominican society and economy were brought under state control. The effects of the Trujillo dictatorships were

twofold. On the one hand, he organized the Dominican economy and solved the debt problem which was a heritage of the nineteenth century; on the other hand, he isolated the Dominican Republic and fossilized Dominican culture in a way comparable to the situation in the Soviet Union at the time. It is the purpose of Espinal's book to analyze the structure of the Trujillo regime and investigate its consequences on present-day Dominican politics. Her point of departure is – contrary to common Dominican wisdom – that it is a fallacy to consider the long-lasting existence of the Trujillo-regime only as a result of repression. She shows how Trujillo manipulated existing ideological undercurrents in Dominican society and in this way managed to acquire massive support in the *masa silenciosa* which was until then neglected by politicians. Trujillo's emphasis on discipline, obedience, and work also appealed to the higher strata, which longed for a modernization of Dominican society. The past was equated with anarchy, and only consensus and order could solve the social and economic problems the Republic was experiencing. The rhetoric of the Trujillo regime lost its appeal in the 1940s and 1950s but unfortunately Espinal does not tell us much about the social processes which can explain the diminishing support for Trujillo in that period. This makes it difficult to assess the great changes experienced by Dominican society after the assassination of the dictator in 1961.

The post-1961 period was very confusing, beginning with the election of Juan Bosch, which was followed by a coup in 1963, a popular revolt, and, finally, the U.S. intervention of 1965. This sequence of events led to a partial reproduction of the pre-1961 "law-and-order" society. The twelve-year rule of Joaquín Balaguer (1966-78) saw a tightly controlled opening up of Dominican society. The Balaguer regime started an extensive construction program which accelerated economic activity and increased urban employment, but simultaneously suppressed popular mobilization. According to Espinal, Balaguer succeeded in creating a national consensus by referring to the rural roots of Dominican society and his promise of a *revolución sin sangre*. Towards the end of his rule this consensus gradually dissolved, partly because his construction policy was thwarted by economic recession, partly because the government failed to integrate the growing urban population in its political project.

The following eight years were politically eventful. Later historians will perhaps consider them the beginning of the end of the Dominican Republic. Still, all the omens indicated a change for the better in 1978. Balaguer was outvoted by the Partido Revolucionario Dominicano (PRD) in honest elections and a military coup was averted by pressure of the U.S. government of Jimmy Carter. The PRD had a long history of courageous struggle for de-

mocracy in the country. In spite of much internal struggle, which led to the departure of Juan Bosch in the early 1970s, the party symbolized the democratic aspirations of the Dominican population. Few parties have taken power with more popular support; and few have lost it so rapidly. Espinal shows how the populism of the PRD was based on the idea of some kind of participatory democracy. All strata of Dominican society had to have access to the state. This policy led to an extreme increase in government jobs and a paralysis of state action. Incompetence and corruption became the hallmark of the Dominican state and within eight years the PRD went to pieces. This failure was shown most clearly in the recuperation of presidential power by the almost blind Balaguer in 1986 and the prosecution of former president Salvador Jorge Blanco on charges of corruption. Following Garretón, Espinal concludes that the party which is instrumental for political change does not necessarily have to carry into effect its consequences. There was no doubt that the PRD had been the most democratic force in the Dominican Republic before 1978, but it was unable to put this vision into practice.

Espinal depicts in clear lines this political development of the Dominican Republic. She has to leave out many aspects of Dominican politics and is unable to answer all questions, but this short book is the best analysis to date of modern Dominican politics. My most important objection against this kind of research is that it remains so close to common-sense analysis, which can be heard daily in the public taxis in the Dominican capital. Our understanding of political processes would benefit greatly from more profound empirical research. The open, non-dogmatic viewpoint of Rosario Espinal allows many queries to spring up. It is hoped that her analysis will be the starting point for future research on the modern history of Dominican society.

*Een democratie in gevaar: een verslag van de situatie op Curaçao tot 1987.*  
J.M.R. SCHRILS. Assen, Maastricht: Van Gorcum, 1990. xii + 292 pp. (Paper  
NLG 43.00)

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"A democracy in danger," by the Curaçaoan historian J.M.R. Schrijs is subtitled "An account of the Curaçaoan situation until 1987," and places me, the reviewer, on the horns of a dilemma. On the one hand I appreciate the book: it shows commendable courage, convincing power, and involvement. All this produces an ambitious study which amply demonstrates the writer's commitment to the problematic nature of the threatened democracy of Curaçao and his passionate protest against it. On the other hand, the book suffers from many shortcomings, and the appreciation of individual readers will vary according to their sympathy with Schrijs' (ideological) starting points.

It is, in my opinion, a highly unpoised book. Unpoised in its construction, its argumentation, even unpoised in the enunciated convictions. I suppose that as a result of the author's particular viewpoint – the 'tense' title "A democracy in danger" already reveals this – a more critical stance, which might have led to a more acute and analytical point of view, is not found.

If the book has scientific pretensions (and pretension it certainly has, as is evident from the approach: attempting to include, grasp, explain, maybe even change all), it is clear that these were not able to measure up to the expectations of current scientific methods.

The first chapter about democracy (28 pages and 107 footnotes) is intended to provide the frame of reference and to offer a measuring-rod for the Curaçaoan democracy. It gets stuck in an eclectic, arbitrary, and super-abundant reproduction of notes selected from the literature. Rather annoying is the way in which so many authors are lumped inappropriately together, for example, "Boshouwers, Luiten and Ball are referring to the following [...]" (p. 15) or "according to Lipset, Mitscherlich and Katz the democracy is being damaged in several ways" (p. 18).

When in Chapter Two the Dutch policy with regard to the Dutch Antilles comes up for discussion, it is referred to in the following manner: "Everything points to the fact that the rest of the Dutch Antilles [including Aruba] was and still is being pushed towards independence. Time and time again the Netherlands tried to broach this subject but each time we (the An-

tillians) knew how to shirk that responsibility." (p. 40). This somewhat simplistic approach and tone illustrates the "Curaçao-centered" view of thinking. Moreover, the repeated use of "we" is sometimes annoyingly generalizing and even a bit monopolizing. In describing the role of the religious rivalries, trade-unions, organizations of employers, and smaller pressure groups, the tone is more subdued and the approach more descriptive, which allows the author to be far more convincing. He aptly rewords the complexity of the problems of the small Curaçaoan community.

Chapter Three offers analyses and perceptions of great value. The conclusion being that easy money via development aid and offshore activities has been sponged for far too long. Also Schrils shows very accurately how the patronage system has its social-economical influence, thus adding to former descriptions by, for example, Verton.

Chapter Four also offers insights worthy of consideration, in spite of quite a few deceptions with the foregoing. For instance, with regard to the former orientation to Venezuela, which is gradually moving towards the Netherlands, or the meaning of faith and superstition. But very explicit remarks without any noticeable basis are also found here, e.g., "Though not scientifically embodied it seems that superstition has increased considerably over the last thirty years," (p. 149).

In his "Recommendations," Schrils gives a couple of directives to improve the democracy, suggesting, among other things, that the most important labor unions should be brought on a level with each other (under guidance of, for instance, Kousa Komun). Next, the necessary changes to the political structure and system should be realized, and then, the line of action should be to improve the economic situation. These steps will aid in the creation of a desirable political culture. Any person who is well disposed towards Curaçao will certainly agree to these assertions, as well as to the need for increasing the administrative effects and the reconsideration of political structure and the electoral system. However, the mere suggestions that closer cooperation is needed, that an institutionalized working party should be formed, or that a more leading role for the university is desirable do not provide answers to the question of how to improve the democracy and will not produce the solution.



*Handbook of political science research on Latin America: trends from the 1960s to the 1990s.* DAVID W. DENT (ed.). Westport CT: Greenwood, 1990. (Cloth US\$ 67.50)

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Useful handbooks of social sciences research on Latin America are scarce; updated handbooks of political science research on Latin America are even rarer. In this context, the handbook edited by David W Dent fulfills a need and is undoubtedly an important contribution.

After an introduction by Dent on political research on Latin America, the handbook is organized in three parts. The first, dedicated to comparative politics, is composed of twelve chapters, each of which analyzes the development of political science during the last thirty years in a particular Latin American country or region. The second part begins with an introductory and illustrative chapter on the patterns of international relations research by G. Pope Atkins and then focuses on the development of international relations in Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean, and South America. The third part consists of three clarifying appendices: a selected bibliography of political reference works on Latin America; a set of tables which present the main macro-trends in political science research, 1960-85, and a list of major research centers and institutes in Latin America and the Caribbean.

On the whole, the volume is a well-structured and useful resource for understanding the development of contemporary political science research on Latin America, supported by an exhaustive bibliography, and a key introductory text for the study of major Latin American political science trends over the last thirty years.

The introduction by Dent presents a brief, clear and remarkably complete picture of the most researched Latin American countries and the main research focuses; the major subjects of investigation; the major sources of scholarly publications; the prevailing background and academic training; the predominant research orientations; and the variations in research emphasis in Latin American and North American political science. The insistence on these variations and on the differences between the main aspects and processes of political science research in North America and Europe, on the one hand, and Latin America, on the other, is one of the most significant contributions of this introduction, helping to understand

the unequal and sometimes distorted development of political science research in contrasting and quite differentiated intellectual conditions and settings. Fortunately, this differentiation permeates the entire volume and is reflected in the generally fair and balanced approach to the different national and regional cases.

This effort to cover thirty years of political science research on Latin America and to include the most relevant contributions in this field in North America and in Latin America has been accomplished with outstanding success and with a notable capacity for synthesis in most of the chapters, particularly in the contributions on Mexico, Central America, and Chile.

Some of the other contributions, such as that dedicated to the Dominican Republic, are less successful and evidence a tendency to privilege the research done by North Americans and local politicians and to ignore the scholarly contributions by local researchers. It is significant in this regard that the works published by José del Castillo or Julio Brea Franco on Dominican political sociology or the study done by Wilfredo Lozano on the Balaguer regime, to mention only a few of contemporary political science contributions made by Dominican researchers, are absent, while the works of Juan Bosch and Joaquín Balaguer are emphasized.

This incomplete coverage in some of the chapters of the volume could perhaps have been avoided if more Latin American researchers had been invited to participate, in order to offer a more complete vision of the contribution of local researchers in the field and to guarantee a more balanced composition of the contributors to the volume. The best illustration of the advantages of including contributions from Latin American scholars can be found in the all-encompassing chapter written for the handbook by Eduardo Gamarra on Bolivia, a lonesome Latin American rider in the predominantly North American list of contributors to the volume.

Political science research done over the last thirty years in the non-Hispanic Caribbean represents another gap. The research done by the Institute of the Social and Economic Studies of the University of the West Indies during this period has greatly contributed to the advancement of political science research in the Caribbean; the studies of Carl Stone, Selwyn Ryan, Neville Duncan, and Clive Thomas are of particular relevance. However, this aspect is partially covered in the chapter written by Damián Fernández on Central American and Caribbean international relations research.

To sum up, and these criticisms notwithstanding, the handbook constitutes a necessary and invaluable introduction to the development of political science research on Latin America in the last thirty years, a comprehensive review of the main trends and focuses in the field during this period, and a sound bibliographical source for any scholar or student involved in Latin American studies.

*The Bahamas between worlds*. DEAN W. COLLINWOOD. Decatur IL: White Sound Press, 1989. vii + 119 pp. (Paper US\$ 8.95)

*Modern Bahamian society*. DEAN W. COLLINWOOD & STEVE DODGE (eds.). Parkersburg IA: Caribbean Books, 1989. 278 pp. (Paper n.p.)

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*The Bahamas between worlds* and *Modern Bahamian society* are welcome additions to the growing literature on the Bahamas. They are especially significant as they deal with the sparsely documented period of the 1970s and 1980s.

A small volume of five chapters, *The Bahamas between worlds* attempts to examine the Bahamas' identity and how it fits into the cultural worlds around it. Collinwood sees it not as North American, nor as part of the Caribbean, but as a "world" which is hard to define.

In the first chapter Collinwood briefly sketches the history of the Bahamas from the Lucayans to Independence in 1973. Although well-written and fairly well-documented, Collinwood's interpretation of the term "creole" and his statement that "the Bahamas was a culture which allowed for easier assimilation [...] and greater eventual equality than most other Caribbean nations" are questionable. "Creole" in the Bahamian and West Indian context means Island or "New World" born. His other statement is arguable because of the extreme racism which existed until the late 1960s.

In Chapter Two, Collinwood describes the dramatic changes which have taken place since the 1940s. Citing various anthropological studies to demonstrate how Bahamians lived before the 1940s, he describes the main event of 1985 which included the Commission of Inquiry into Drug-Trafficking, the subsequent debate and its repercussions, in contrast.

He concludes that the Bahamas, with its fast pace, political changes, and social confusion, is in "social transition" and this causes a strain on its relationship with its "historical allies." It is no wonder, then, that the Bahamas failed to support its Caribbean neighbors and its North American ally in the U.S. invasion of Grenada as the author relates in Chapter Three.

Examining the Bahamian educational system in the 1980s, Collinwood argues that it is also in transition and that there is a crisis which he attributes to problems experienced by administrators and teachers alike. His concluding chapter, while calling for more research especially in the social sciences,

insists that academic work be known by policy makers. Collinwood posits that in order for Bahamian culture to survive, it must ally itself politically and economically with a larger economy so that it can avoid the exploitative effects of mass tourism and allow for more even development, especially in Nassau. This is perhaps the ideal. However, while growing nationalism would probably prevent it, there are signs, for example in the joining of CARICOM, and in the participation in the West Indian Commission, of maturing integration. He also sees a need for political change in the Bahamas. An appendix with a short essay examining the reasons for the invasion of Grenada ends the thought-provoking book.

*Modern Bahamian society* is a collection of essays by various authors on political, economic, and cultural themes. Dean Collinwood, while introducing the volume with a paper on "The Bahamas in social transition," underlines the rapid changes that have been experienced by the Bahamas. It discusses the problems, the good qualities, the role of religion, political campaigns, and life and society in Nassau, the capital. While it is a well-written essay, its sparse footnoting and sometimes impressionistic evidence worried this reader.

Part Two, "Political change" introduces briefly and outlines the three essays, previously published, which follow. They include a chapter "Black Tuesday" from Doris Johnson's book, *The quiet revolution*, a landmark account of the throwing of the mace out of the window of the House of Assembly on "Black Tuesday" in April 1965; a revised and expanded chapter from Steve Dodge's excellent book *Abaco: the history of an Out Island and its cays*, and a chapter "Symbolic politics in a racially divided society" from Colin Hughes' *Race and politics in the Bahamas* which contains perhaps the most detailed and searching analysis of political development in the Bahamas between 1953 and 1977. The section concludes with a brief essay by Davidson Hepburn on "Bahamas diplomacy since Independence," a personalized account by a seasoned Bahamian diplomat who describes the operation of the Bahamian delegation at the United Nations. The Afterword, which gives an account of the political situation in 1987, presumably written by the editors, ends the section.

After a brief introduction on the modern economy, Part Three outlines the articles which are contained in this section. The first one "The Bahamas: an assessment of post-Independence economic experience" by Ramesh Ramsaran examines and analyzes the general post-1973 economic development utilizing tables and concludes that although the Bahamas' economy has done fairly well, some problems including rising unemployment, lack of diversification, and the failure to integrate tourism into national development prevail.

Felix Bethel, in "Tourism, public policy and national development," stresses the Bahamas' dependence on tourism and calls it a "monoculture." He bemoans the fact that tourism continues to mainly benefit non-nationals. He argues for more local participation and like Ramsaran, integration into a national development scheme.

The concluding essay in this section, "Bahamianization and economic development," by Franklin Wilson, examines the commitment of the Progressive Liberal Party (PLP) Government to maintain economic growth while implementing a Bahamianization policy. He strongly suggests that Bahamian entrepreneurs should be encouraged while the Government and private sector come together on discussing the issues. The afterword summarizes the main arguments of the contributors.

Part Four, "The cultural context," after a brief introduction, includes a well written "A day in the life of Bramley" (a fictitious village on Cat Island) by Jonathan Levey; "Public education in the Bahamas," a well argued and documented account of the successes and failures in public education in the modern Bahamas by John Trainor; "Themes in modern Bahamian literature," a pathmaking piece by Dean Collinwood who explores the characteristics and major themes which have impacted on Bahamian writers; "The cultural arts in the Bahamas," a succinct and informative definition of Bahamian culture by Winston V. Saunders; "The Bahamian cultural renaissance" by Jackson Burnside, who argues that creative energies can preserve and also create pride and identity and can be used in tourism promotion; "Alcohol and drug abuse in the Bahamas" by Colin Archer, which traces the growth of alcohol and drug abuse in recent years and shows the pervasiveness of the drug trade. He concludes that the Bahamas Government is committed to "a war on drugs," but wonders whether the Bahamian society feels likewise.

The Afterword examines the deleterious effects of tourism on The Bahamas and the book concludes with a dispassionate account by Steve Dodge of the Election of June 19, 1987 when the PLP was returned to power for its sixth successive term of office.

The value of these two volumes lie in the exploration and documentation of important issues which affect modern Bahamians. Although there is some unevenness in the essays contained in *Modern Bahamian society*, the author and editors are to be congratulated. These two volumes are recommended reading for students of Bahamian social and political science and history.

*Critical perspectives on Jean Rhys.* Pierrette Frickey (ed.). Washington DC: Three Continents Press, 1990. 235 pp. (Cloth US\$ 25.00, Paper US\$ 15.00)

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I said, 'Do you consider yourself a West Indian?'  
She shrugged. 'It was such a long time ago when I left.'  
'So you don't think of yourself as a West Indian writer?'  
Again, she shrugged, but said nothing.  
'What about English? Do you consider yourself an English writer?'  
'No! I'm not! I'm not even English.'  
(Plante 1983:44)

The negative brooks no contradiction. The shrugs may be difficult to interpret, but Jean Rhys's West Indian connections are in fact undeniable. Born in Dominica in 1890, her formative years and experiences were spent in Roseau, where her parents lived, and Grand Bay, where her mother's family, the Lockharts, had their estate, formerly one of the largest and richest on the island but by the end of the century already in genteel decay. Rhys left the island in 1907 and, after desultory schooling in England, lived a bohemian existence in the London and Paris of the 1920s. The early fiction of those years is tinged with memories of the West Indies but, after her brief and by no means happy return to Dominica in 1936, almost all her subsequent writings are imbued with Caribbean motifs, especially her final novel, *Wide Sargasso Sea*, begun in the early 1940s but not completed until 1966.

Rhys was peculiarly insistent on the historical specificity of *Wide Sargasso Sea*. When she sent the first two parts of the novel to her editor, she wrote:

The typed (and heavily corrected) part is the most important – it's the story of an old West Indian house burned down by the negroes who hate the ex-slave owning family living there. The time 1839, the white creole girl aged about 14 is the "I". (Rhys 1985:214)

The West Indian episodes in *Jane Eyre* are set before 1820, so Rhys was making a significant alteration to her "given" material, adapting the chronology to her own family history and placing the events of the novel on the other side of the watershed of Emancipation. Pierrette Frickey's reference to 1830 as "after the Emancipation Act" (p. 2) hardly suggests a serious

approach to these historical questions. What tends to be lost sight of, even in the best of the existing work on *Wide Sargasso Sea* is the way in which the novel offers a certain kind of negotiation of these nineteenth-century materials, historical events filtered through family memories. The failure of Carole Angier's massively detailed and impressive biography (1990) to shed much light on Rhys's early years and family history suggest that the West Indian angles to her life and work are far from exhausted. Frickey notes that "of common concern to all is the life of Jean Rhys about which there are more speculations than accurate facts" (p. 1), but on this subject it has to be said that her book does not inspire much confidence. *Smile please*, Rhys's autobiographical memoir, and her correspondence are said to "tell her story accurately" (p. 2), a statement which suggests a rather naive attitude towards the fictionality of all discourse. A perfunctory section called "Rhys on Rhys" and a three-page review of *Smile please* by John Updike make little contribution.

The West Indian perspective to the work, however, is well represented here, with several of the key articles on *Wide Sargasso Sea* included (by Kenneth Ramchand, John Hearne, Louis James, and Michael Thorpe), along with more general pieces by Elaine Campbell and Lucy Wilson. Both Ramchand and James usefully discuss the early disagreement between Wally Look Lai and Edward Kamau Brathwaite as to the status of Rhys, whom Brathwaite wanted to reject as a model for West Indian writing. What underlies these disagreements between West Indian critics is, in part, different understandings of the process of "creolization," a key but contested term, especially in the Caribbean where – except for the small Carib presence – no aboriginal group provides an unproblematically "authentic" population. The most regrettable absence from this volume, therefore, is probably that of the difficult and heterodox voice of Wilson Harris, who has written about Rhys on a number of occasions, always with the intent of forging an appropriately creolized critical vocabulary.

Harris's general position distinguishes itself both from what he calls "ghetto fixations" – a barb presumably aimed at Brathwaite, and from the kind of vapid universalism towards which Ramchand's criticism often tends. Instead Harris offers what he calls a "limbo" perspective, using the name of the dance developed on the middle passage to suggest a "gateway" or "threshold," a "dislocation" which allows the creole experience in its widest sense to be taken as "a new corpus of sensibility that could translate and accommodate African and other legacies within a new architecture of culture" (1970:8). *Wide Sargasso Sea* is willy-nilly a West Indian novel from this perspective. For Harris, the color of its author is irrelevant, as even is her intention in writing; indeed it seems as if *Wide Sargasso Sea* is West Indian

to the extent to which regional myths have "secreted themselves [...] unaware" into the fabric of the novel (1980:142).

Pierrette Frickey writes about how Jean Rhys "is an author claimed by both England and the Caribbean," and how she has therefore included both West Indian and European/American criticisms (p. xi). Perspectives are not necessarily limited by provenance, but the inclusiveness makes for a valuably wide-ranging volume, which – despite Harris's absence – can certainly claim to offer a broad introduction to critical thinking about Rhys over the last twenty years, along with a "comprehensive" bibliography which will provide an indispensable starting point for future scholarship.

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*El Dorado and Paradise: Canada and the Caribbean in Austin Clarke's fiction*. LLOYD W. BROWN. Parkersburg IA: Caribbean Books, 1989. xv + 207 pp. (Paper US\$ 11.95)

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This is the first all-encompassing study of Austin Clarke's prose, a writer who was born in Barbados but has spent part of his life in Toronto. The book is important because it not only allows readers to discover this major author but also raises interesting questions about the traditional categories of ethnicity that Canadians have used in defining their own culture, categories that are entrenched in the ambiguous Canadian notion of "multiculturalism."



Lloyd Brown's essay is itself a literary work which goes beyond traditional literary categories. In his preface to the book, the late Frank Manning, professor of anthropology and then-editor of the series, *Culture and Performance*, which published Brown's book, justifies his inclusion of Brown's work in a series dedicated mainly to drama, festivity, sports, ceremony, and other "popular forms of collective symbolic expression" (p. vii). Manning notes that Brown's presentation emphasizes the theatrical forms inherent in Clarke's writing and that it also defines elements of a new cross-cultural founding mythology which structure the immigrant experiences of Clarke's characters. In Brown's interpretation, the world of Austin Clarke becomes the unfolding of a series of rites of passage grounded in two myths that reflect two conflicting gazes: first, the image of El Dorado which goes back to the period of the Spanish conquistadores and reflects the way Clarke's West Indian characters see the New World as the promised land; and second, the image of a tropical paradise, the Caribbean as it is perceived by white Canadians who filter their perception through Christian mythology, especially as it is reinterpreted by John Milton.

Surprisingly, however, even though these two myths form the basis of his arguments, Brown gives almost no historical background – several sentences at most – concerning the colonial origins of these myths. He might have dwelt upon the relationship between the notions of "Paradise" and "Utopia," and the accounts of explorers dating back to the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, as well as the evolution of these myths through eighteenth-century Enlightenment and nineteenth-century Romanticism. He might have traced, even briefly, the recurrence of these and related myths in other Caribbean writings. Nevertheless, Brown does show, and very well indeed, how these myths develop through three periods of Clarke's fiction and this development constitutes the essence of his analysis.

According to Brown, the fiction of the first period, which takes place in Barbados, explores the North American vision of the Caribbean paradise by showing the rampant misery and poverty in the British colony. The texts of the second period are constructed around the exodus, as the Bajan characters leave the "island paradise" and immigrate to Canada. Here, they confront the El Dorado myth which becomes an extension of the American Dream as they struggle to adjust to their country of adoption. In this context, Brown emphasizes the importance of the first two novels of a trilogy, *The meeting point*, and *Storm of fortune*. The third period focuses on the failure of all paradises, Caribbean and Canadian. Here Barbados, which is not always named, becomes the symbol of all post-colonial Caribbean societies where corruption and power struggles persist in spite of the new independent status. The third novel of the trilogy, *The bigger light*, refutes the

Canadian dream of a harmonious multicultural society. Well steeped in his Fanonian model of the master-slave relationship, Brown emphasizes the fact that the problems of Clarke's black immigrants in Canada reflect the broader constitutional debate currently taking place in Canada between the two founding cultures, Anglo-Canadian and Franco-Canadian. These internal Canadian conflicts parallel the contradictions and tensions that Clarke sees in his own Caribbean society where sexual, ethnic, and cultural differences co-exist in an uneasy truce. Brown's analysis is extremely interesting in the context of Canadian fiction. By revealing Clarke's deep understanding of the way Canadian society functions, Brown forces Canadian critics to rethink their own ambiguous label of "ethnic writer." Given the new texture of Canadian society, a sum of differences, the label "Canadian" fiction can no longer apply only to writers of white, English-language extraction.

Another noteworthy element of Brown's analysis is his explanation of the relationship between Clarke's language and the way it functions in the text. Critics might say that his study is hampered by the fact that Brown is obviously not a linguist, but his approach would seem to reply to Edward Brathwaite's comment in *History of the voice*, that "few writers [...] have gone into nation language as it affects literature. They have set out its grammar, syntax, transformation, structure and all of those things. But they haven't really been able to make any contact between the nation language and its expression in our literature" (1984:15-16). Brown does in fact make that contact.

Brown's analysis goes beyond the simple dichotomy of standard English, which represents power, versus Barbadian dialect, which represents lack of power. He shows that the use of various forms of dialect, which he also calls "folk language," "folk idiom," and "modified dialect," associated with black American slang, become practices that convey other meanings. The use of certain forms of language become, as he puts it, "public performance [...] conscious acts of performance" which resemble the performance of the story-teller or that of the carnival dancer: "the exuberance, the strutting and the flamboyant play-acting of the carnival" (Brown 1979:131). Here the performers, orators, and story-tellers must play roles, and Brown elaborates the functions of the various roles that are signified through the use of language. For example, he notes that the bombastic and flamboyant style, the jokes, and bawdy macho expressions, are often ways of concealing deep-seated emotions. He also points out the subversive use of the "folk idiom" which becomes a sign of vitality, creativity, and energy, not weakness and impotence. He refers to the word games played by the children in Latin class (mary-hairy-camus, mairy-hairy-cunt) (p. 166), the elegy recited at a formal ritual of mourning, calypso verses, and the wedding speech in *Storm of*

*fortune* where one of the guests mocks a traditional literary form by spewing off a bombastic list of "well chosen moppers," and quotes Sparrow (p. 166).

Brown also notes that dialect and standard English co-exist as ways of signifying the parallels between the two cultures, Caribbean and Canadian, and the equivalent differences in each culture. He finds that "if the oral idiom of the Caribbean immigrants too readily lends itself to raucous disorder, the bookish language of Canada's sleek young professionals is mere non-communication [...]. In summary, the counterbalancing of styles involves the weighing of cultural values: cultural affirmation versus colonial imitativeness and self-contempt, Canadian orderliness versus Caribbean disorder, Caribbean vitality versus the psychic death of Canadian decrepitude" (p. 168). In a final chapter, Brown states that although Clarke's fiction appears to denounce the failures in both Caribbean and Canadian cultures, John Milton's vision of Paradise remains the sustaining myth. It becomes the symbol that feeds Clarke's imagination, the image by which he aspires towards a means of redeeming these societies from materialism, hate, racism, and violence, all the remnants of the colonial past shared by Canada and Barbados. Paradise then, is the ultimate mirage. In the final analysis, it would seem that Brown's study gives Austin Clarke the privileged cross-cultural status of both Canadian writer and Caribbean writer, an indication that Clarke's artistic activity has created its own particular space where Paradise and the Promised Land are closely intertwined, and perhaps even inseparable.

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*De Surinaamse literatuur 1970-1985: een documentatie.* MICHEL VAN KEMPEN. Paramaribo: Uitgeverij de Volksboekwinkel, 1987. 406 pp. (Paper n.p.)

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With this voluminous work on Surinamese literature and literary criticism, Michiel van Kempen intends to document its importance and rapid growth in the historically crucial period from 1970 until 1985. In those fifteen years, all the debates were dominated by the term independence and different points of view rarely found a way towards each other. For persons who tried to get into the logic of these polemics, this book provides a valuable and even pioneering orientation. It is organized in three parts. In the first (descriptive) one, reflections on criteria for Surinamese literature turn out to be most difficult. In the second (bibliographical) part, 1122 titles of poems, short stories, novels, articles, and essays – and as many again from secondary sources – are listed, often quoted from newspapers or magazines of only local distribution. The volume concludes with a detailed index of nearly 100 pages, making the whole an effective reference tool.

Considering the fact that no academic department – in Suriname, the Netherlands, or anywhere else – develops teaching or research programs specialized in the field, the relevance of this documentation clearly consists in offering a framework that can be used in various ways. Discussing his periodization model in the first part, Van Kempen appears to be particularly aware of this point. He constantly refers to the lack of serious academic work in this field, so important for the orientation of the small intellectual community living in or out of Suriname. The importance of, on the one hand, approaching literary criticism in its most general interpretation and, on the other, relating controversial items to the points of view from other Caribbean authors like Frantz Fanon or V.S. Naipaul, who project the local situation within a broader international scope, seem to be inevitable.

Van Kempen does not succeed, however, in developing such alternatives but prefers to concentrate on the presentation of already known positions like being Surinamese or not, having a national approach to cultural conflicts or not, having criteria for literary qualities or not, etc. Hardly any mention can be found of the highly political debate on literary criticism in the United States, decolonization, multiculturalism, or feminism, or, in recent Afro-American studies, to the modern history of former plantation societies. Hence, this descriptive part does not offer new insights into the

dynamics of literary processes related to Suriname. In addition, a typical Dutch schoolmasterly tone is not always avoided, for instance when claiming that Suriname still does not have "sane" (sic) cultural politics (p. 63), followed by discussion of an enormous amount of unofficial cultural activity such as theatre, lectures at schools, and other activities for youth. But these remarks are by no means intended to reduce the importance of this documentation; it rather characterizes the actual state of the art, due to institutional limitations and lack of professional interest. This is not the case for Van Kempen, one of the most active and enthusiastic scholars of Surinamese literature. Certainly this book has to be considered as a standard work, and will be stimulating to all persons interested in the field.

*Language in exile: three hundred years of Jamaican Creole.* BARBARA LALLA & JEAN D'COSTA. Tuscaloosa AL: University of Alabama Press, 1990. xvii + 253 pp. (Cloth US\$ 39.95)

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This book contributes to the field of pidgin and creole studies by providing valuable historical and demographic data that shed light on the origins and development of Jamaican Creole. Lalla & D'Costa offer interesting insights into creole genesis not only through their careful mapping of the migrations from Europe and Africa which constructed the Jamaican society, but also through extensive documentation of early texts. Substratal and universalist hypotheses have recently been put forth as explanations of the formation of pidgin and creole languages. This book contributes to the debate a balanced perspective that argues for an integrated version of those two hypotheses. It is demonstrated that Jamaican Creole is "the logical result of a continuity of both West African and English dialectal structures" (p. 119).

The first half of the book discusses Early Jamaican Creole (Part I, pp. 1-123); the second half presents a collection of texts from the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Part II, pp. 127-215). The final pages include a brief glossary of some of the lexical items occurring in the texts (pp. 223-32).

Chapter One, "The colonial crucible," nicely summarizes the complexity of the population movements which affected Jamaica before and after the English replaced the Spanish in the second part of the 17th century. Maps of

England, West Africa and Jamaica illustrate major population movements and settlements.

Chapter Two, "Source materials," emphasizes the difficulty of finding sources for Early Jamaican Creole in view of the fact that creoles were oral languages: there is no written record of Jamaican Creole in the seventeenth century, and eighteenth- and nineteenth-century sources originate from educated Britons, speakers of metropolitan English, who report on a creole with which they are not well acquainted and sometimes present in a biased manner (pp. 42-43). On the other hand, materials written by native speakers of creole (e.g., love letters) are likely to reveal hypercorrection. The authors are honest and thorough in their evaluation of the data base, yet manage to provide a partial reconstruction of early Jamaican linguistic features.

Chapter Three, "Reconstructing the sound system" and Chapter Four, "Morphosyntax and lexicon," provide brief summaries of the sound system, morphosyntax and lexicon of Early Jamaican, based on a comparison of early seventeenth-century British English and nineteenth-century Twi. Some discussion of the tables would be in order, as the reader is led to believe that those languages are the major contributors to the genesis of Jamaican, which is in fact not what the authors mean to say, as further discussion in Chapter Six clearly shows.

Chapter Five, "Language variation," provides useful reference to the extent of variability already present in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It appears that there were more opportunities for social and cultural mixing (between class and color groups) than has often been assumed, and that therefore the merging and separation of linguistic identities might have led to a linguistic continuum from very early on. This is well illustrated with reference to two social events (one in each century) that included different types of speakers. Tables 14 (p. 89) and 15 (p. 94) identify a few basilectal features that appear to occur across the race/class continuum. I only regret that the texts (or excerpts) referred to were not among those presented in Part II of the book. The argument would have been more convincing, too, if some quantitative measurements had been provided: as it is now, the reader does not know whether the reported occurrence of each of the eight basilectal features selected was based on one or more instances, and how extensive was each individual's speech contribution.

Chapter Six, "Implications of the data," is a balanced summary of the complex social and linguistic situations leading to the development of creoles. The importance of the converging forces involved in the formation of Jamaican Creole is illustrated in Chart 10 (pp. 120-21): linguistic contributors include direct repeated input (through various waves of migrations) both from West African languages and from social and regional dialects of

English (in particular Hiberno-English, Scottish English, and Nautical English) as well as an ancestral anglophone creole, Guinea Coast Creole English, which developed independently on the West African coast from African and European sources, and was later transported to the West Indies.

The second part of the book is a fascinating collection of three eighteenth-century texts and nineteen nineteenth-century texts which will be highly valuable to linguists, historians, anthropologists, psychologists, and anyone else interested in the Caribbean or in the history of mankind. Those diaries, stories, and letters help reconstruct life in Jamaica mostly from the white man's perspective, although there are texts written in 1877 by a bidialectal "brown man," Henry Murray (pp. 169-72) and another written by a black slave in 1837, James Williams (pp. 165-67). The texts reflect the arrogance of the white masters, the brutality of the overseers, the ethnic conflicts between whites (Irish, Scotch, Jews), the importance of color ("Miss Malvina was a lady of colour, somewhere about quadroon in blood, and tolerably light brown" – p. 177), but also the continuity of African traditions and the spirit, resilience and humor of the creoles.

In conclusion, Lalla & D'Costa's book contributes an important segment of Jamaican history which will constitute a useful reference in further studies of the Caribbean.

*Jamaican sayings: with notes on folklore, aesthetics, and social control.* G. LLEWELLYN WATSON. Tallahassee FL: Florida A & M University Press, 1991. xvi + 292 pp. (Cloth US\$ 29.95)

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Published collections of proverbs and sayings, of varying quality, have been compiled from several Caribbean societies over the years. From both Haiti and Jamaica there have been three or four, at least one each has come from the Bahamas, Barbados, Martinique, and the Virgin Islands, and Lafcadio Hearn's delightful *Gumbo Zhebes*, published in the 1880s, includes proverbs from five Caribbean Creoles plus Mauritius. To say this does not in the least detract from Llewellyn Watson's latest; on the contrary, it only underscores the lack of analytical and comparative work that should by now have

built on these earlier collections but has not yet been attempted. Rather than unpacking these treasure chests of African Caribbean proverbial wisdom and exploring their contents for insights into social life and history, we have allowed them to sit on the shelves as mere "folklore."

The indigenous social science tradition, at least in the English-speaking Caribbean, has been especially neglectful until now of Caribbean thought as distilled in the region's proverbs and other folk forms. Alas: "Young bud no know w'en berry ripe a mountain side." While assorted "humanists" have, from time to time, sought to draw on and extend the work done by Beckwith, Cundall and others, social scientists have generally trumpeted other causes. One of the unintended consequences of the publication of this book, written by a Jamaican-born sociologist who teaches at the University of Prince Edward Island, may well be to start breaking down this unfortunate disciplinary prejudice.

*Jamaican sayings* records over 1400 proverbs and sayings. Most are accompanied by a literal translation, and for more than two-thirds of them, a brief interpretation is presented. The sayings are grouped under broad themes, arranged alphabetically and numbered. Most, the author tells us in his useful general introduction, were collected in the course of several field trips to Jamaica, but the collection was also supplemented by additions drawn from earlier compilations. Significantly, the idea for the research project and the collection came out of discussions among a group of Jamaicans living in North America.

Watson's book is so stimulating that one finds oneself asking for it to do more than is reasonable for a volume intended for the general reader. The proverbs employ standard formulae for communication through metaphor that are readily grasped and easily replicable. Given this, and the fact that African societies on the continent and in the diaspora are known for the value they place on innovation, it would be good to have this dynamic quality explored as it relates to the creation of new proverbs, both nowadays and in the past. From time to time in the author's interpretations there is discussion of the historicity of particular proverbs, usually in relation to the slave context. But the subject matter of other sayings suggests different influences and other contexts that are not explicitly noted. For example, the following suggest by their referents a post-emancipation social setting:

Man nebber know de use a water till de tank dry. (A man never knows the value of water until the tank is dry.)

Passn cawn preach wid dutty collar bikaaz all yeye deh 'pon 'im.

(A parson should not preach with a dirty collar because all eyes are on him.)

Some specificity as to where particular sayings were collected, which ones



were recorded by one or another of the earlier collectors, and what variations were found on a particular proverb in the course of fieldwork might all have made the work more useful for purposes of understanding innovation, change, and variation in this genre of Caribbean oral literature. On the other hand, to follow up on such questions would likely have delayed the book's production and made it less appealing to a wide readership.

There are small problems with grammatical consistency and orthography in the recording of Jamaican Creole: for instance, the occasional lapse into an English plural, "W'en I talk, no dawgs bark" (instead of "dawg") or into more standard English constructions as in, "Dere are many ways fe heng a dawg widoutn putting string 'round 'im neck." Watson's somewhat idiosyncratic orthography for Jamaican Creole highlights the real need for standardization. Besides these concerns, there is also one with regard to the organization of the book, and that is the need for a greatly expanded index to topics and themes addressed by the proverbs. This would make for easier cross-referencing and facilitate further analytical work on the collection by others.

But these shortcomings detract little from the value and enjoyment of the collection. There is much here to be explored comparatively; even from a cursory reading of collections of proverbs from other parts of the Caribbean, one is struck by the close similarities between some items from one country to the other. Whether it be the scholar interested in comparison, or who wants to examine, for example, the treatment through time of status inequality in Jamaican thought, and the coherence of indigenous economic ideas, or the general reader wanting to bone up on some choice Jamaicanisms, this collections of proverbs will prove richly rewarding.

*Kaiso, calypso music.* DAVID RUDDER in conversation with JOHN LA ROSE. London: New Beacon Books, 1990. 33 pp. (Paper £2.95)

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Trinidad's David Rudder is perhaps the most popular of the soka generation of calypsonians in World Music today. After singing American soul music in the 1960s, an apprenticeship under Kitchener in the early 1980s and fame as the lead singer of the group, Charlie's Roots, he entered mainstream

calypso stardom with his stunning defeat of Gypsy and Stalin in the Calypso Monarch Competition in Trinidad in 1986. In this short booklet he muses on the history of calypso and on his own career, with John La Rose. La Rose is the founder of New Beacon Books, as well as a poet, essayist, and ghost writer with Atilla the Hun (Raymond Quevedo) of the classic calypso artifact in prose, *Atilla's kaiso*. The occasion for their conversation is the presentation of tapes of classic calypsos compiled by John Cowley to the (British) National Sound Archive on October 8, 1987. The text is edited from that conversation, held before an audience.

Much of the book skims over important names and dates in the history of calypso: a tape of the first calypsonian on record, Julian Whiterose, is played and comments are made; the role of merchant Sa Gomes in promoting calypso is touched upon; recordings are played by Atilla the Hun, Lord Kitchener, and Lord Beginner. This stuff is appropriate for an audience at the program at the National Sound Archive, but it doesn't add anything to calypso scholarship.

What is intriguing, though, is Rudder's discussion of his own life, the influences that turned him toward calypso, and the extraordinary remark he makes concerning the night in the Queen's Park Savannah in 1986 when he sang "The hammer" and stole the calypso crown from Stalin and Gypsy. Rudder grew up in Belmont, Port of Spain, in an area steeped in West African religious traditions. Although thrice baptized into the Christian faith (Anglican, Baptist, Roman Catholic), he also assimilated Afro-Trinidadian religious roots, particular Shango. That night in the savannah, he brought these life experiences to bear when he sang one of his two required selections, "The hammer." (The other was "Bahía girl.") "The hammer" is the story of Rudolph Charles, the leader of the "Desperadoes," an important steelband from Laventille. This legendary steelbandsman had recently died and his life was the subject of many calypsos that year. I had been in Trinidad a few weeks earlier and I was rooting for Gypsy, who I saw perform in tent to many ovations. His song was called "The ship is sinking." In it, Gypsy viewed Trinidad's economy as a sinking ship, whose old, dead captain (former Prime Minister Eric Williams) was needed to get Trinidad back on course. "No way" could Gypsy be defeated, for "The ship is sinking" was truly one of the great calypsos of a generation. But I had missed the finals and I didn't know for certain if Gypsy had won. Some months later, when one of my Trinidadian students told me that Rudder had won, I asked, "Isn't he that pop singer who tries to sing calypso?" But my student had brought me a videotape of the finals. There was Stalin with a fine performance; there was Chalkie (Hollis Liverpool, college professor calypsonian); there was Gypsy; there was Rudder. Sadly, Gypsy had strained his voice from all those

nightly successes in the calypso tent; he didn't look good. But Rudder – forget all that anti-soka garbage! He was out of this world. It is worth the cost of the booklet for Rudder's explanation of that singular event. He envisaged the steelbandsman Charles' spirit with him on stage and he sang as if he were there. I was deeply moved by the video of the performance. Imagine what it was like to have been there! Because of his explanation of this first calypso victory, and because of the other events in his life which he touches upon, Rudder comes across as a thoughtful heir to the grand calypsonians of the past.

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*Pidgin and creole tense-mood-aspect systems*. JOHN VICTOR SINGLER (ed.). Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins, 1990. xvi + 240 pp. (Cloth US\$ 58.00)

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Ironically, the most quoted person in this volume is not one of its contributors: with his strong claims about the form of creole tense-mood-aspect (TMA) systems, Derek Bickerton (1974, 1981) has set the agenda for researchers in this area. In part this book is a response to Bickerton's assertions about TMA systems, but it is also a much-needed collection of detailed studies of this part of the grammar of a range of different pidgin and creole languages.

The languages discussed are varied, but the coverage is still not comprehensive: of pidgins/creoles with European lexifiers we have Capeverdean (Portuguese), Haitian (French), Berbice Dutch, Papiamentu (Iberian), Hawaiian, Kru, and Calabar (Nigerian) Pidgin English. (Labov's paper also discusses Hawaiian Creole and New Guinea Pidgin, but in less detail.) Kikongo-Kituba is the only language represented here without a European lexifier. Strangely, the English-lexifier creoles Jamaican, Saramaccan, Sranan, and Krio (among the best-studied) are absent entirely, as are detailed

studies of the South Pacific pidgins (Tok Pisin, Bislama, Hiri Motu). It would be wrong to dwell on the omissions, however, as the authors collectively do a very good job of showing the diversity and complexity of the TMA systems under study. Further detailed studies of pidgin and creole TMA systems will be welcome, but are unlikely to make matters appear any simpler.

Labov's (1971) article, "On the adequacy of natural languages: I. The development of tense," is published here for the first time, and is somewhat unlike the others. It begins with the argument that nonstandard languages are no less logical than standard ones – an argument no longer of much interest to linguists, though no doubt the general public remains to be persuaded or even made aware of it. Labov moves on to a discussion of tense marking in Hawaiian Pidgin and Creole, with some discussion of New Guinea Pidgin and other languages. At times it is evident that this paper was written twenty years ago. The distinction between different types of pidgin (rudimentary, extended, creolizing) is not well established, and alone of the articles in this book, this paper contains no reference to Bickerton's work. Labov's claim is that while pidgins do not systematically have grammatical tense marking, creoles do: not because this is essential for communication, but because it provides a vehicle for rich stylistic variation, which is an essential feature of an "adequate" language. While this is an interesting (and researchable) claim, it is not really taken up elsewhere in the volume.

Each of the other articles is devoted to discussion of the TMA system in a single language: Roger W. Anderson on Papiamentu, Salikoko S. Mufwene on Kikongo-Kituba, Arthur K. Spears on Haitian, Izione S. Silva on Capeverdean Crioulo, Ian E. Robertson on Berbice Dutch, Joan M. Fayer on Nigerian Pidgin English in Old Calabar, John Victor Singler on Kru Pidgin English. Singler also contributes a short introduction.

The articles differ in whether their focus is on tense, aspect, or the whole TMA system: mood receives less coverage, except from Spears. Each article, in its own way, describes a system that is unlike the prototypical creole system of Bickerton (1974). Anderson shows that the basilectal Papiamentu TMA system is in fact closer to Bickerton's prototype than Bickerton himself realized; however, there are still several points of difference. Mufwene describes for Kituba a complex system of three basic tenses and four basic aspects, some of which are marked by inflection: rather unlike Bickerton's prototype. Haitian, according to Spears, "differs significantly" from Bickerton's system. So does Capeverdean Crioulo, for Silva, which has post-verbal suffix marking anteriority, as well as a number of other differences. Berbice Dutch, too, has both preverbal markers and suffixes, as Robertson shows. Fayer's article, "Nigerian Pidgin English in Old Calabar in the

eighteenth and nineteenth centuries," reveals, on the basis of traders' letters and a diary kept in Pidgin, that that language had basically no TMA marking on verbs; while Singler shows that although there is a "fundamental congruence" between the "decreolising" Kru Pidgin English system of mood and aspect and that hypothesized by Bickerton, this is not so for tense, which is essentially unmarked.

What then, we must ask, remains of Bickerton's hypothesis? Each of these languages disproves it in some respect. However, Bickerton's claims relate to creoles arising in a particular social context, at a particular stage of their development. We know that one characteristic of pidgins and creoles is their accelerated life cycle, which does not necessarily slow down from the time of creolization. In order to discount Bickerton's hypothesis altogether, it will be necessary to show that post-creolization (and decreolization) factors have not altered the systems in question away from the Bickertonian prototype. This in itself means that more research will be required in defining terms like "decreolization" which, though widely used, are not well understood. Thus Bickerton's most lasting contribution may turn out to be the stimulus for research like that reported in this book.

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*El mundo que creó el azúcar: las haciendas en Vega Baja, 1800-873*. PEDRO SAN MIGUEL. Río Piedras, Puerto Rico: Ediciones Huracán, 1989. 224 pp. (Paper US\$ 7.95)

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Although sugar was cultivated in Puerto Rico at the beginning of European colonization, only during the nineteenth century did production begin to

develop on a significant scale. The industry progressed slowly until U.S. intervention at the end of the century dramatically transformed it. Pedro San Miguel provides a detailed portrait of the origins and evolution of the sugar industry in the municipality of Vega Baja during the period when control of the plantation system was still in local hands. Although the island's first central refinery was established there in 1873, Vega Baja, a district on Puerto Rico's north coast, was not a major center of sugar production. Instead, its relatively modest concentration of haciendas and slaves was typical of most districts where sugar was grown. The municipality possesses particularly rich archives that enabled the author to reconstruct the evolution of landed property, the family histories of the proprietors, and the demographic and social characteristics of slaves and laborers, as well as the changing character of the labor system during the course of the nineteenth century. San Miguel is thus able to illuminate the transformation of the Puerto Rican agrarian and social structure at an important point in its historical development.

The first chapter provides an overview of the movement of landed property in Vega Baja as sugar displaced subsistence agriculture, cattle-raising, and perhaps contraband. In addition, it treats the concomitant growth of population through natural increase, voluntary migration, and above all, the forced importation of slaves. The author reveals the growing complexity of the social, demographic, and agrarian structure. While sugar monopolized the best land, its development was confined to particular barrios. Large property continued to coexist with diverse peasant smallholdings engaged in varied combinations of subsistence and cash crop production located in other barrios of the municipality.

The second chapter examines patterns of ownership and concentration of land, slaves, and sugar on the various haciendas. Through the reconstruction of the biographies of individual planters and family histories, the author emphasizes both the commercial origins and character of the *hacendados* and their heterogeneity. The large haciendas were owned by foreign immigrants or criollos from other municipios who had access to the capital necessary to acquire land, slaves, and machinery. In contrast, the local "patriciate" had few opportunities during the eighteenth century to acquire sufficient capital to convert to sugar. Their small- and medium-sized sugar estates began to disappear by the 1840s and 1850s.

In the third chapter, San Miguel argues for the importance of slavery in nineteenth-century Puerto Rico despite the small percentage of slaves in the general population. He shows that slave ownership in Vega Baja was concentrated in the hands of the sugar *hacendados* and represented their primary source of labor. He presents a demographic profile of the slave

population, demonstrating its links to the expansion of sugar and cycles of the slave trade. He relates demographic change to slave employment on the haciendas and argues that the growing proportion of children and old people in the active labor force was among the factors that compelled planters to look elsewhere for labor.

The next chapter examines the creation of a free labor force out of the peasantry. This labor force was characteristically young, geographically mobile, and racially diverse, though a racial hierarchy was beginning to emerge within it. It included a significant number of urban artisans, as well as rural workers with differential access to land. Even as small holdings became less viable, the majority of laborers maintained links with the peasantry and moved back and forth between "worker" and "peasant." State compulsion was necessary to ensure a supply of free laborers and guarantee labor discipline. San Miguel emphasizes the growth of co-ownership (*aparcería*) and use of family ties to resist the imposition of permanent wage labor. Despite the growing number of free workers after 1849, they did not provide an entirely satisfactory alternative to slave labor. Indeed, slaves, accustomed to plantation routines and often skilled, were a relatively privileged group and remained important until emancipation.

In the final chapter, San Miguel reconstructs the investment and productive structure of the sugar hacienda. The sugar plantations of Vega Baja were modest in size and output by mid-nineteenth-century standards. Concentration of production and increased productivity only became evident during the 1860s after the largest plantations converted to steam mills. Nonetheless, high costs and the absence of clear technical advantage retarded innovation. The estates continued to produce semi-refined muscovado sugar. Profits depended more on the scale of operation than on technical efficiency. Fragmentary evidence on profits and expenses further suggests that the progress of the sugar industry was impeded by high labor costs and the drain of capital to the commercial sector.

In this well-executed monograph, the author systematically uses a variety of sources to reconstruct the social, demographic, and agrarian structure of Vega Baja. His interpretation of the evidence is judicious, and he carefully frames local processes in their national and international contexts. It usefully contributes to the historiography of rural Puerto Rico and complements existing work.

*Sembraron la no siembra: los cosecheros de tabaco puertorriqueños frente a las corporaciones tabacaleras, 1920-1934.* JUAN JOSÉ BALDRICH. Río Piedras, Puerto Rico: Ediciones Huracán, 1988. (Paper US\$ 6.95)

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*Sembraron la no siembra* is a study of the boycott of the Puerto Rican tobacco farmers against the Porto Rico Leaf and Tobacco Company in 1931. After World War I, there was a steady decline in the price U.S. corporations paid for Puerto Rican tobacco. In 1931 Puerto Rican tobacco farmers tried to withhold deliveries of tobacco in an unsuccessful attempt to raise prices.

The first stage of the boycott began with an assembly of tobacco farmers in San Juan on June 28, 1931. Represented in the assembly were the municipalities which had tobacco farmers' cooperatives and a background of organization. Cayey, Aibonito, and San Lorenzo were the strongholds of the farmers' movement. After the assembly, the leaders of the movement attempted to persuade other tobacco farmers to withhold sales of tobacco. This stage lasted until the destruction of the properties of the Porto Rico Leaf Company on August 20, 1931.

The second stage of the boycott lasted from August 20 until a second attempt against the properties of the Porto Rico Leaf Company on October 13, 1931. The action against Porto Rico Leaf was followed by swift repression by the colonial authorities against the farmers' movement.

During the third and last stage, Los Caballeros de la Noche (Night Riders) tried to enforce the boycott by burning tobacco warehouses of dissident farmers who sold their tobacco to the corporations. The third and final stage lasted from October 13, 1931 to the last recorded burning of a tobacco warehouse on June 7, 1932. The majority of the incidents of destruction of property were recorded during the third stage.

Puerto Rican historiography has traditionally concentrated on the rise of the sugar industry and on the decline of the production of coffee during the period 1898-1934. Baldrich's study represents a welcome departure from this trend, focusing instead on the tobacco industry, a field traditionally neglected by Puerto Rican historians.

Baldrich has carried out an impressive task of reconstruction of the events of 1931. The study is based on police records of the tobacco farming municipalities, now located in the Archivo General de Puerto Rico. From the police reports, Baldrich was able to reconstruct the details of the de-



struction of tobacco farms and warehouses during the boycott, and the activities of the Caballeros de la Noche. From the press, he reconstructed the public activities, meetings, and proclamations of the farmers' movement. The book convincingly details the development, climax, and slow withering away of the boycott.

One aspect of the book is not convincing at all. Baldrich portrays the movement as originating with the wealthy tobacco planters instead of the farmers. However, the existence of this class of tobacco *hacendados* is not demonstrated. Here are Baldrich's own figures (p. 118) of the average size of a tobacco farm in Puerto Rico:

Year	Acres planted
1909	2.7
1919	4.1
1929	3.1
1935	2.6
1939	1.7
1949	1.8

A distribution of farms would give us a better depiction of the realities of tobacco farming than the averages. Yet the very figures Baldrich gives are in contrast to his account of the tobacco boycott. The boycott represented, according to Baldrich, the interests of the *hacendados tabacaleros*, sometimes referred to as *los señores del tabaco* or even as *señores de la tierra*. Yet the figures show the opposite: tobacco was a small farmer's crop. The typical organization of the tobacco farmers was the cooperative. And even these cooperatives were beyond the reach of most farmers. The towns with cooperatives were the strongholds of the boycott. Most tobacco municipalities lacked cooperatives and relied on a complex network of merchants and usurers for credit and markets. The theoretical scheme which insists on the existence of *hacendados del tabaco*, perhaps borrowed from the studies of the *hacendados* of the coffee region, seems to be artificially superimposed.

More important than this shortcoming, however, are the merits of *Sembraron la no siembra*, which has unearthed the history of a hitherto forgotten farmers' movement. Tracing the activities of a secret organization of Night Riders, town by town and sixty years after the events, by reading the police files is no small achievement. Most importantly, the study shows that we know less than we previously thought about our agrarian history. There may be in the archives materials about movements long forgotten, waiting to be unearthed by original and diligent researchers like Baldrich.

*La traite rochelaise.* JEAN-MICHEL DEVEAU. Paris: Kathala, 1990. 334 pp. (Paper 150 FF)

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This is neither a statistical analysis of the Atlantic slave trade in the manner of Philip Curtin or Jean Mettas nor a profile of the French port-merchant families engaged in the trade in the manner of Paul Butel, John G. Clark, Jean Meyer or Henri Robert. Instead, Jean-Michel Deveau presents us with every detail of the slave ship from her capitalization, construction, fitting out, and composition of officers and crew to her voyage from La Rochelle on the French Atlantic to the African coast and then by the famous "middle passage" to the French West Indies, Saint Domingue in particular. In addition to the mandatory administrative correspondence and notarial archives, Deveau has mined a number of collections of family papers, including ship-logs which give the book a special cachet.

I strongly suspect that the author has spent a lifetime in the archives of La Rochelle, only a stone's throw from the famous twin towers that still guard the inner harbor. The price for such commitment has been a refusal to abandon a single sailor's death inventory or a single sack of dried beans in the ship's hold. We learn about every item of food consumed on the voyage (though without any dietary analysis), every piece of Cholet cloth packed aboard, and every sickness contracted by slave and crew alike. The first half of the book furnishes a useful catalogue, though there are no surprises, and what emerges is the monotony, more than the anxiety and violence, of routine life aboard a slaver.

Fortunately, Deveau's dogged insistence on showing us every document has its rewards when he quotes extensively from the ship logs of captains Proa and Crassous. In so doing, what Deveau's study lacks in incisive analysis of a set of explicit questions is compensated by an evocative description of the African coast and a demonstration of the countless difficulties of the French captains and crews, not to forget the horrendous conditions of the "captives" in the hold.

Not that Deveau's findings will come as a surprise to any Africanist. But a few conclusions are worth emphasizing. First, the ship's officers and crews did not venture on land unless they had to. This was particularly true for the French traders who lacked forts like the English, Dutch, and even Portuguese. In the course of the century the French had been driven by fierce

competition and often sheer force eastward along the African coast from the Cape of Palms on the Gold Coast (Ghana) to the Bight of Benin, maintaining a rather precarious hold on the ports of Juda and Porto Novo. The French captains were obliged to negotiate with the local African princes from off shore or by sufferance of an English or Dutch post. Occasionally they might risk a tent or log-shelter on the beach, but they had a healthy respect for local African arms and for a very unhealthy disease environment.

For the most part the captains conducted the trade in small lots on the famous "pirogues," 36-foot shallow-draft boats which could carry ten or twelve people, and were highly maneuverable by skilled Africans who could negotiate the dangerous coastal reefs. Slaves were purchased, not in large gangs, but after endless petty bargaining in small lots up and down the coast. This meant that a slaver would have to remain off the Guinea coast for months with the danger of food and water shortage and the outbreak of scurvy and other diseases. Not to mention the possibility of a slave revolt as the holds became full. Slave revolts were much more common in sight of the African coast than on the middle passage. No wonder the ship carpenters worked day and night constructing high railings above the slave quarters and mounted with swivel-guns which were fired often to terrify the captives below. The ship logs convey an impression of long periods of boredom, bad food, and tropical fever punctuated by short bursts of activity.

What did the French captains think about the Africans? In 1789 Captain Crassous joined the French Revolution. Sailing past the Canaries two years later, he regretted that the islands were not inhabited by "free men." The captain was off to Mozambique to purchase slaves, and saw no contradiction between his words and behavior. As for the religion of Africans, Crassous commented on their "fetishism" "and "superstition," concluding that "their ideas were too weak to permit them to lift their spirit to the Great Being" (p. 133). On the other hand, when the captain was negotiating with Prince Sainson of Dahomey, he referred to him as "sharp, crafty, and politically astute," even "respectable and polite" (p. 214). For Crassous at least, chains, not color of skin, were the signs of the "indelible stain" of slavery.

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*The Dutch in the Atlantic slave trade, 1600-1815*. JOHANNES MENNE POSTMA. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990. xiv + 428 pp. (Paper £ 30.00)

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The core of this study is the presentation of quantitative data about the slaves shipped by the Dutch, the African points of embarkation, the distribution of New World destinations, the sex and age compositions of the cargoes, mortality on the coast and middle passage, the African and American slave prices, and some rough calculations of profitability. Around this core are grouped descriptive parts dealing with political and economic developments in the Dutch Republic, West African coastal societies and the Dutch colonies in America that clarify the setting of the Dutch slave trade, changes in organization, and fluctuations over time. The organization of the book is topical rather than chronological which raised some problems of composition that Postma did not always successfully solve, e.g., the discussion of the free trade traffic started on pp. 116-25, is resumed only on p. 201. Readers not familiar with the outline of the story should be prepared to fit together some parts of the puzzle all by themselves.

Summarizing the research of others Postma is relatively brief on the Dutch slave trade in 1600-75. His treatment of the period 1675-1815 is much more extensive and largely based on his own research which added substantially to previous data and insights. Through painstaking archival investigations Postma succeeded in a ship-by-ship reconstruction of the trade, presented in appendices 1 and 2, which provided him with the data base for his quantitative analysis. This is solid work by which he put all later investigators into his debt.

However, as a survey of the whole of the Dutch slave trade Postma's work is less satisfactory, although in the absence of a competitor still a useful

guide. He is clearly less familiar with the pre-1675 period. This shows in his treatment of the trade in 1648-74. His sketch is based on the unpublished data of Franz Binder. The quantitative data are not the issue; they are probably reasonable approximations. It is the description of the organization of the trade and the interpretation of the context that are problematic. Postma was unaware of the extent to which the financial weakness of the first West India Company (WIC) forced it to share the monopoly of the African trade with changing groups of non-company traders. Before 1674 the trade became semi-privatized. This raises the question to what extent, between 1674 and 1730, the second WIC was able to regain an effective monopoly or whether it had to resort again to semi-privatization. In his extremely brief discussion of the financing of the company slave trade Postma does not discuss these questions, although they affect his evaluation of the introduction of the free trade regime in the 1730s.

Second, Postma describes the resurgence of the Dutch slave trade after 1648 as caused primarily by the Dutch share in the *asiento* trade. He may be right, but it contradicts the widespread view that accords primacy to the Dutch in the slave trade to the English and French Antilles in the third quarter of the seventeenth century. The reader can only guess what his reasons for disagreement may have been. This episode in particular also raises the issue of the usefulness of a national framework. Traders and financiers found ways of getting around mercantilist exclusion not only by interloping and smuggling, but also by private international cooperation. Postma's categories seem too clear cut. Not only for this period, but for the eighteenth century as well his discussion would have benefitted, had he occasionally broadened it to include developments in England, France, and their plantation colonies.

Postma's analysis of the slave trade as a business leaves a number of questions unanswered, particularly for the eighteenth century. African slave prices more than quadrupled. Did European cost prices for barter goods go up, did Africans receive more goods or was it combination of both? Information on the composition of African cargoes and specific barter transactions is indispensable for an analysis of this subject. Postma himself notes, rightly, that the matter deserves more research than he has been able to devote to it. American slave prices rose less steeply; hence the trade margin decreased. How did the traders react? Did the slave trade become less profitable over time? Here again, one wishes that Postma had broadened his scope somewhat to include the financial structure of the Dutch plantation sector. Was there indeed, as has been suggested, a separation between a Zeeland-based slave trading interest and a Holland-based plantation interest? The author may have been wise in not raising questions he could not answer, but the questions do indicate the sometimes rather narrow limits of his study.

*Plantages op Curaçao en hun eigenaren (1708-1845): namen en data voornamelijk ontleend aan transportakten.* T. VAN DER LEE. Leiden, the Netherlands: Grafaria, 1989. xii + 87 pp. (Paper NLG 49.75)

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This book contains a survey of owners of Curaçao plantations in the period 1708-1845 (or, more accurately, from about 1720 until 1845). The author made use of the old archives of Curaçao (in the Algemeen Rijksarchief – General State Archives, The Hague), especially of the series Secretarial and Notarial Protocols. In these protocols she traced all deeds of conveyance regarding plantations. Only incidentally are data from other sources added. The owners are mentioned for each plantation and the plantations are arranged alphabetically. A short introduction, some illustrations, a bibliography, two indices, and a map of Curaçao dating from 1836 – which can only be read with the help of a magnifying glass – complete this small book. There is no information on the plantations nor any interpretation of the data; the author merely confined herself to the painstaking work of collecting them.

The author does not indicate for whom this book is intended, but I suppose that she aims at a broad public. There will surely be great interest in the subject on Curaçao. Many people are curious to know who the owners of the former plantations were. The question is, however, whether this book can serve as a practical guide for them. The very first requirement for such a book is that it ought to be easy to use. Anyone who is interested in the history of a certain plantation should be able to find out the identity of the owners of that particular plantation. Unfortunately the book does not fulfill this condition. For a number of well-known plantations it indeed presents a convenient survey of the owners in the period from about 1720 until 1845, but a great number of other plantations cannot be traced, largely because of the names under which the plantations are mentioned.

Anyone who deals with the history of Curaçao plantations will be confronted with the problem of names. All plantations had official names which appeared in the deeds. A new owner could change the name and, indeed, this happened on various occasions. Besides, many plantations had yet another name, which was used in daily conversation; frequently this name was derived from the first name or surname of one of the former owners. In many cases this popular name has been in use among the people of Curaçao for 150 or even 200 years. The author, however, always used the official

name recorded in the deeds; in only a few cases does she mention a second name although for many other plantations a second or even a third name can be found in the deeds. Since the official names are not identifiable, the reader will look for many well-known former plantations in vain. It would have been wise for the author to have classified the plantations under the names by which, within living memory, they have been known on Curaçao; to each name she could have added a list of former names. If she had done so, she would have discovered that owners, who in her book are mentioned under different plantations, are in fact the successive owners of one and the same plantation. For example, "Boventuin" (p. 6) and "Vergenoeging" (p. 53) are both names for "Jongbloed," a name which can be traced back to an eighteenth-century owner; and "Uilenburg" (p. 51) and "Vredenberg" (p. 55) are two names for Jansofat or Jan Zoutvat, a name mentioned in the deeds since 1820, referring to an owner of the early eighteenth century, but not known to the author.

Some other problems with the names deserve brief mention:

- Five plantations are presented under the name Vredenberg, a rather confusing puzzle for the average reader, who will hardly know one plantation of that name; the reader will have similar problems with Vergenoeging (4x), Welgelegen (4x), and Zorgvliet (3x).
- Some plantations are mentioned with a name which, in the nineteenth century, belonged to a neighboring plantation (for example, Klein Piscadera or Suikertuin).
- Some of the names mentioned refer to parcels of ground or *tuintjes* (small gardens), which have probably never been regarded as real plantations.
- Sometimes the author herself was mixed up by the names. On p. 28 she confused the plantations Paradera and Klein Paradera (or Phlip). Worse is the mistake made with "St. Clara" (p. 41): part of the incorporated deeds refer to the plantation Plantersrust (earlier called St. Clara), the other part refers to a parcel of plantation Phlip, situated in quite another part of the island. The same mistake has been made with the two plantations "Rust en Vree": the deeds of these plantations have been confused from 1824 onward; besides, some deeds of a third "Rust en Vree" have been erroneously added.

It should be clear that this book cannot serve as a practical and reliable guide for anyone who is interested in the history of the plantations of Curaçao. As only a few readers have a profound knowledge of the changing names of the plantations, most of them will soon lose their way. Those who are only interested in plantations of which the names never changed will be happier with this book. People who want to study the history of the plantations scientifically can consider it as a first step on the long path of research they have to follow.

Finally, it is rather disappointing that only deeds covering the period 1708-1845 are listed. The author states that only from 1708 onward have the protocols been preserved. But it would have been possible to add earlier data if the author had used the available literature. The same can be said of the period after 1845. Other researchers did gather data on the owners of Curaçao plantations before 1708 and after 1845.

This book is far from being the last word on Curaçao plantations or plantation owners. What people interested in plantations are waiting for is a profound study on the plantations of Curaçao, which includes (almost) complete lists of owners from the lay-out of the plantations in the 1660s up to the twentieth century. Van der Lee's book can only be seen as a contribution to this greater work.

*The Boni Maroon wars in Suriname.* WIM HOOGBERGEN. Leiden, the Netherlands: E.J. Brill, 1990. xvii + 254 pp. (Cloth US\$ 60.00 NLG 105.00)

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Wim Hoogbergen, an anthropologist at the University of Utrecht, has written a meticulous account of the Boni Maroons of Suriname. Most of us are more familiar with the Ndjuka, the Saramaka, or even the Matawai Suriname Maroons, because of the body of scholarship on them. Not much, however, has been published on the Boni in English other than two articles by Silvia de Groot. For his study, Hoogbergen drew on contemporary accounts, oral tradition, and archival sources, and like those of us who have worked on the Jamaican Maroons, Hoogbergen also discovered that the archives remain the major source for Maroon histories (p. xv).

The Boni Maroon situation represented a special kind of dynamic after the Dutch conducted formal peace treaties with the Ndjuka (1760), the Saramaka (1762), and the Matawai (1769). The relationship between these pacified Maroons (in effect, the Ndjuka) and the Boni developed into one of Byzantine complexity. It varied from free informal mingling to trading arrangements, from formal fraternal declarations of friendship through the sweri ceremony to downright hostility. The sweri was a sacred oath, also performed at the peace treaties in the 1760s (p. 28), reminiscent of Cudjoe's blood oath in Jamaica during the peace ceremony. This oath was considered



sacred, and if it was broken, in Maroon cosmology, death and damnation would befall the guilty party. There was also much intermarriage between the Boni and the Ndjuka. Thus a complex kinship connection based on consanguinity was established (pp. 175-76). Yet all this did not prevent tension and constant strife between the two groups. At times the Ndjuka assisted the government parties attacking the Boni, while pretending to be "neutral" (pp. 152-53; 175 and *passim*.) But this bad relationship was largely due to the machinations of the Dutch authorities, who, predictably, were set against any friendship arrangements between them. The Machiavellian policy of divide and rule finally culminated in the collaboration of the Ndjuka with the authorities in the most decisive battle against the Boni.

Unlike Jamaica, Maroon societies in Suriname were complicated by the presence of different Amerindian tribes. In some cases, especially in the initial formation of all Maroon settlements, the Amerindians were most hostile to the blacks and were effectively used by the authorities to catch and return runaways for which they, too, were compensated. The relationship would, however, improve, at times developing into real friendship and cooperation after a Maroon group was well established and could provide for itself. It is fascinating that some of the Boni became so friendly with the Wayana Indians that two of the latter were reported to have "talked with the Boni in 'Galibi' (a Carib dialect)" (p. 193).

A weakness of the book is the sparsity of analysis, and some good opportunities were missed (e.g., pp. 58, 80, 193). This, unfortunately, bogs down the text which already suffers from frequent stylistic clumsiness in addition to numerous errors – probably the result of translation from Dutch to English. The work would also have benefited if even passing references had been made to other Maroon societies of the region.

Students of Maroon societies in the New World will find Hoogbergen's work an important addition to the literature. It has given us a wealth of information on the important Boni group, which seems to have possessed, during the colonial period, a high degree of ethnic consciousness. A strong feature of the work is the attention paid to oral tradition and its juxtaposition with archival sources where possible. This is important generally, but those folk traditions connected with the death of Boni are particularly significant. They all serve to show the esteem and reverence the group had for its leader, making it impossible for them to believe that he could have been killed by ordinary means (pp. 178-83).

*Los guerrilleros negros: esclavos fugitivos y cimarrones en Santo Domingo.* CARLOS ESTEBAN DEIVE. Santo Domingo: Fundación Cultural Dominicana, 1989. 307 pp. (n.p.)

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Recent years have witnessed a notable growth, both qualitative and quantitative, in studies of American slavery. This may not be unrelated to the fact that, according to UNESCO, by the end of this century the number of descendants of Africans brought to this hemisphere as slaves will pass the 100 million mark.

Scholarly research has steadily widened our knowledge of certain aspects of slavery: the trade, manumission, the slave family, the sectors formed by free blacks and mulattos, abolition, and rebellion. This last topic has been amply documented, from the uprisings in the West African baracoons and on the ships, and the passive resistance – silent but firm – which pervaded the work life of the enslaved, to the great rebellions and the *palenques*.

At present, the empirical study of marronage is showing signs of a certain saturation: each new text covers the same familiar ground (with only slight local variation) of relations between slaves and masters, between *palenques* and neighboring communities, or between Maroons and smugglers, corsairs, and pirates. It would seem, then, that only a comparative approach can produce new results.

It is in this context that we can read the contribution of the well-known Dominican historian Carlos Esteban Deive. According to his introduction, *Los guerrilleros negros* undertakes to “study the history of marronage in the Spanish colony in the light of new information from the Archivo General de Indias.” Deive’s work is impressively detailed. He reconstructs with admirable rigor the history of marronage in the Sierra del Baoruco and in the maroon settlement of San Lorenzo de los Minas, the tensions and conflicts provoked over the course of several centuries by the emigration of rebel slaves toward the Spanish side of Santo Domingo, and the effects of the Haitian Revolution on the Spanish colony. Deive uses a rich collection of unpublished information to fill in one gap after another left by his many predecessors.

Deive’s discussion of the dialogue between Spanish and French communities proves especially interesting. He analyzes with precision the various economic, political, and moral factors that motivated maroons to flee toward the Spanish section of Santo Domingo.

However, the final chapter of the monograph is a definite disappointment: not only is its relation to the preceding chapters loose, but it lacks the solid documentary foundation so much in evidence throughout the rest of the book. After claiming that the "available literature" says nothing about the cultural life of these maroon societies in depth, Deive attempts a rather unsuccessful characterization of maroon culture, about which he affirms: "What has been referred to as maroon culture is based in large part on an Afro-American slave culture which began to take shape in the first years of slavery, and in which it is important to recognize the strength of an African-based ideology" (p. 278).

It seems clear that a rigorous approach to the contradictions, tensions, and evolution of maroon culture demands an imaginative articulation between the records left by slaveholders and present-day oral traditions that survive among, for example, the Boni and the Saramaka. In this respect, the limitations of Deive's method are instructive: the distance between historians and anthropologists must be bridged before we can hope to arrive at a fuller understanding of American history.

*Suriname 1933-1944: koloniale politiek en beleid onder Gouverneur Kielstra.* HANS RAMSOEDH. Delft, the Netherlands: Eburon, 1990. 255 pp. (Paper Dfl 49.50)

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When word reached Suriname that the Dutch government had nominated J.C. Kielstra as Governor of the colony, reactions in Paramaribo were generally positive. Kielstra seemed the right man to solve Suriname's social and economic problems. Yet, in the eleven years of his administration he became one of the most unpopular individuals in the history of the colony. His critics labeled him a "conservative" and even a "reactionary," and his policies had a disastrous effect on Suriname. His few supporters called him a "pragmatic social reformer." Everyone agreed, however, that the Kielstra period marked a watershed in Suriname history. Despite the fact that the Kielstra administration served as a catalyst, scholars have paid little attention to this fascinating episode in the colonial history of Suriname. Hans Ramsoedh's fine dissertation fills this historiographical gap.

Basing his study on solid archival research, Ramsoedh gives an interesting picture of Kielstra's administration. In his inaugural address the Governor announced a new "double" policy based on economic recovery through budget cuts and a social policy aimed at reducing migration to the capital and the promotion of small-scale agriculture. In addition, Kielstra feared that the economic crisis of the 1930s would lead to further social unrest which in turn would create support for communism. This "leftist threat" was countered by infiltration of political groups and press censorship, followed in 1935 by the banning of political organizations.

Yet the opposition to Kielstra was fed not only by his dictatorial tendencies or his wielding of the budget axe and the accompanying tax increases but also by his policy of *verindisching* ("indianization"). This policy, directed at British Indian and Javanese migrants, was to intensify the social and political ties of these population groups and to keep them in the districts. Local Asian leaders had to control their countrymen. To strengthen this policy of *verindisching*, Dutch civil servants, educated at the Academy for East Indian Officials, replaced the sons of the local Creole elite in the government. Finally, Kielstra recognized separate marriage laws for Asians, thus breaking the existing judicial uniformity (*rechtseenheid*).

The colored elite, in particular, fiercely resisted *verindisching*, because it did not want to give up the idea of assimilation and a unified Christian and Dutch society. The (limited) emancipation of the Asians and the arrival of Dutch civil servants undermined the position and power of the Creole elite. To make matters worse, the Second World War caused Kielstra to remain in Suriname years longer than originally planned and gave him even more room to exercise his authority. He declared martial law and outlawed political activities of the Creole leadership. The departure in 1944 of the reactionary Kielstra was greeted with a sigh of relief and represented the beginning of the end of the colonial era in Suriname.

Thanks to Ramsoedh we know a lot more about Suriname at this decisive point in its history. A minor point of criticism is that the author stays too close to his sources and clearly hesitates to draw his own conclusions, even though the controversial Kielstra and his remarkable policies offer a golden opportunity to do so.

*Onvoltooid verleden: de dekolonisatie van Suriname en de Nederlandse Antillen.* KEES LAGERBERG. Tilburg, the Netherlands: Instituut voor Ontwikkelingsvraagstukken, Katholieke Universiteit Brabant, 1989. ii + 265 pp. (Paper NLG 25.00)

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The proclamation, in 1954, of the Statuut (Charter) of the Kingdom of the Netherlands was a hallmark in the constitutional development of the former Dutch Caribbean colonies. According to the Statuut, the three partners in the Kingdom were to enjoy autonomy in internal affairs. Only defense, foreign affairs, and the guarantee of "proper government" – a vague, much-debated concept ever since – were Kingdom matters, handled in the Dutch-dominated Kingdom cabinet.

In 1975 Suriname, eagerly stimulated by the Dutch, opted for full independence. The Netherlands Antilles on the other hand continue to interpret their right to self-determination as the right to remain within the Kingdom. After two decades of vain efforts to convince the Netherlands Antilles to opt for full independence, the Dutch government, in the 1990 *Schets voor een Gemeenebestconstructie*, faced the facts and explicitly took independence off the agenda. The discussion now focuses on a slight modernization of the Statuut, and on the restructuring of the Netherlands Antilles. The second-largest of the former six-island state, Aruba, attained a status aparte in 1986 and next successfully fought the package deal imposed by the Dutch, namely independence in 1996. As it became clear that the Arubans had attained *separashon* within the Statuut, both Curaçao and St. Maarten began to urge for a similar status. The Dutch are now trying hard to achieve at least structured disintegration of the Netherlands Antilles, into three new countries (Aruba; Curaçao and Bonaire; St. Maarten, St. Eustatius and Saba). But even this Dutch policy might well shatter.

*Onvoltooid verleden*, according to its subtitle, is a book about the decolonization of Suriname and the Netherlands Antilles. In fact, it offers a lot more, including some 100 pages of historical resumés, but no fresh insights in the discussion on decolonization. The historical introduction (pp. 1-71) plus recurring historical sections scattered throughout the book are a jumble of commonplaces, inconsistencies, inaccuracies, and unsubstantiated comments; moreover this "history" is largely irrelevant to the stated subject matter of the book, decolonization.

The chapters on post-War developments do not substantially add to the extant literature on the period from 1945 (or 1954) up to the mid 1980s. The long and detailed sections on the situation in the late 1980s have become obsolete due to subsequent developments, particularly the 1990 Schets for the Antilles and, regarding Suriname, the second, short-lived military coup of 1990, the 1991 elections, and current talks on the possible establishment of a "Commonwealth" relationship with the Netherlands. Moreover, these chapters suffer from a lack of organization and focus, and an overdose of repetitive quantitative illustration. For instance, anyone interested in population figures for Curaçao may use the tables on pp. 171, 175, 216 or 219. Similar comments may be made regarding other tables, e.g., the various ones on migration. By contrast, one misses a clear analysis of the main elements and functioning of the Statuut. Likewise, the by-now crucial problem of narcotrafficking – one of the main reasons why the Dutch decided to resume a higher profile – is mentioned only once, in passing, as a temporary aberration (p. 243).

In short, this book really does not measure up. The author, having taught these subject matters for some decades at a Dutch university, ostensibly knows a lot, and wants to incorporate all this in a book. Perhaps this explains the proliferation of tables and interesting but not terribly relevant side-lines. Yet the main arguments are ill-defined. This reader at least would have been better served with a shorter book, or an extended article on the major themes at stake: Can decolonization stop short of full independence without relapsing into de facto recolonization? What are the Dutch interests at stake? What repercussions will "Europe 1992" have for the Dutch Caribbean? And the bottom line: is there any reason to expect that these small territories will ever become viable independent states?

*Eight East Indian immigrants.* ANTHONY DE VERTEUIL. Port of Spain: Paria, 1989. xiv + 318 pp. (Paper TT\$ 75.00)

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Affirmations of the Trinidadian national anthem's ideal that "every creed and race find an equal place" take many forms. In this book Anthony de Verteuil aims to demonstrate the equal place of East Indians in Trinidadian

society through biographies of eight immigrant laborers. Depicted as starting with little or nothing, his subjects are shown making significant contributions to the cultural and social fabric of Trinidad – a message that resonates with contemporary nationalist discourse and efforts toward a conciliatory ethnic politics. There are, therefore, two ways to read this book: literally, as historical documentation, and symbolically, as partly representational of a larger national perspective.

De Verteuil places his subjects within a larger context and uses it to highlight their particular circumstances and life choices. By combining these two levels he accomplishes his laudable objective of both “relating the story of interesting individuals” and telling “the tale of all Indian immigrants” – a tale that traditionally has been “an impersonal account of a faceless multitude” (p. xiii). Data derive from “family tradition,” archival records, and secondary historical and anthropological sources. However, no subject’s voice is heard; the most recent year of immigration to Trinidad was 1894 (“Capildeo”). This relative antiquity and de Verteuil’s eulogistic tone render these individuals rather larger than life, contributing to their effect as symbols of a group as well as being concrete examples of “real” people. De Verteuil’s own voice alternates between scholarship, surmise, and chatty narrative.

Chapter One briefly raises reasons for nineteenth-century emigration from India and details the recruitment and emigration process and dispersal to the various estates. Each subsequent chapter is a biography, illustrating the diversity of immigrants and the many dimensions of the indenture experience. “Gokool” begins as a plantation laborer and becomes a businessman and estate owner; “Soodeen” is an estate laborer and eventually Presbyterian elder; “Sookoo” is an estate *sirdar* (headman) and a leader of the Indian opposition to colonial regulations against the annual Hosay festival; “Capildeo” goes from estate laborer to shop owner, itinerant village pandit, and political activist; “Beccani” is an estate laborer, marrying a non-Indian estate manager and becoming a small estate owner; “Ruknaddeen” begins as an indentured laborer and religious teacher, and becomes Qazi (“chief judge”) and Sheik-ul-Islam of Muslims in Trinidad as well as co-founder of the Anjuman Sunnat-ul-Jamaat Association; “Valiama” arrives as a free “creolized” Tamil immigrant from Martinique, is self-employed as a chef, masseuse, dairy entrepreneur, and for a time single parent, and becomes a landowner and family matriarch; “Bunsee” begins as indentured laborer and progresses to shopkeeper, estate owner, and oil magnate.

While de Verteuil is able to show that these immigrants are both “unique” and “perhaps very typical, [...] particularly in their determination to make a success of life” (p. 18), his perspective on these “successes” constitutes both

the major weakness and the major strength of this book. "Success" can be read in the resistance to colonial oppression through political activity or by perpetuating Indian religious and cultural heritage (e.g., "Soodeen," "Sookoo," "Capildeo," "Ruknaddeen"). Success is also evident in the perseverance of these immigrants' wives, and in the stories of "Beccani" and "Valiama" which underscore their determination and resourcefulness despite the gender oppression and ethnic and class prejudices of the time.

However, embedded within de Verteuil's notion of success is a theme associating Indians and money and contrasting religious and materialistic values. "How pleasant it is to have money" is the opening line of the prologue, "Coming in search of money"; its last sentence admonishes Trinidadians that "a proper attitude to wealth" is required "if the country is to become truly great under God" (p. 23). De Verteuil's interest in the immigrants' acquisition of money and its significance for their lives and character reflects his conviction that "religious beliefs [...] determined whether the man or his money was to be the master" (p. 23) as well as his desire to explain a putative connection between Indians and wealth. This lends credence to a local stereotype and at the same time promulgates a particular moral position on "success." We see this most clearly in "Bunsee" and his progeny, who, as de Verteuil's least sympathetic characters, did not adhere to Hindu ideals and were overly concerned with worldly pursuits (pp. 243-44). The lesson conveyed is that money gained from hard work and with attention to religious commitment is well-deserved; fortuitous wealth "may ruin the soul of a man" (pp. 258-59). One might speculate that this book serves as a homily for Trinidad's future.

This book is most useful to Caribbeanists or Indian diaspora specialists for its social and historical information. While its effort to acknowledge Indo-Trinidadians is to be congratulated, its idiosyncratic agendas make it less appropriate for a general readership unfamiliar with the issues.

*The economizing strategy: an application and critique.* WILLIE L. BABER. New York: Peter Lang, 1988. xiii + 232 pp. (Cloth US\$ 45.50)

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Baber's main aim in this book is to critique economic approaches to social analysis, which he calls the "economizing strategy." The author argues that this strategy, best represented in anthropology by the transactionalism of



Fredrik Barth, stands in sharp contrast to the analytical privileging of histories of production. Baber presents data gathered during his late-1970s anthropological fieldwork in the Martinican village of Morne Vert within the latter tradition, and explicitly contrasts his findings with the economic assumptions he sees underlying Horowitz's analysis of the same community (Horowitz 1959). However, Baber wishes to show that while inattention to history and power weakens economic approaches, Marxist analyses can nonetheless be enhanced by the incorporation of technical tools from the repertoire of marginalist, neo-classical economics.

Baber begins with an apt characterization of Barth's transactionalism, which he establishes as the epitome of the "economizing strategy." Here social behavior is understood as rational exchange between knowing actors who seek to maximize value and minimize loss. What Baber sees as lacking in this sociological method is attention to relations of power. For transactions to work to everyone's benefit, there must be sociocultural homogeneity and equal access to material and ideational resources. But because these conditions exist in virtually no society, accounting for social change is very difficult, since this framework's prerequisites allow no room for history or differentiation. For the author, a more satisfying approach to sociocultural change is the one delineated by Mamdani (1976), who emphasizes histories of production. In particular, Baber argues for understanding social class as generated in processes of production and not, as it is in economic approaches, merely through greater access to wealth and distributive resources.

With this theoretical framework outlined, the author presents the conclusions Horowitz drew from fieldwork in Morne Vert – specifically that the village was dominated by a prosperous, relatively independent peasant sector, and was notable for low levels of stratification and a high degree of sociocultural consensus. Horowitz also argued that while it was "formally" possible to impose a class-based analysis on his data from Morne Vert, he did not observe the "behavioral correlates" of such a system in the village (Horowitz 1959:124, cited in Baber p. 140).

Because Baber sees Horowitz's analysis as permeated with the timelessness of economic assumptions, to the detriment of a more historical-materialist approach, he challenges the latter's conclusions. He argues that his own fieldwork revealed that there was much greater stratification, in both the 1950s and the 1970s, than Horowitz uncovered or admitted: for example, *békés* (white creoles) owned significant lands with the village limits, and many "peasants" performed wage labor for larger landholders. Only because Horowitz ignores the historical relations of power implicit in Mintz's definition of Caribbean peasantries as "reconstituted" can he characterize Morne Vert as unstratified. By contrast, Baber sees class relations

as the major force behind social change in the village.

Yet while for most of the book Baber is critical of the "economizing strategy," he does argue in conclusion that marginalist economics offers several technical tools which can be incorporated into production-oriented analyses. Similarly, he shifts tone to acknowledge that it is important to see value created not just in processes of production, but in the articulation of production and exchange.

This attempt at integration, however, is belied by several inconsistencies. While Baber takes Horowitz to task for his alleged failure to contextualize Morne Vert within broader systems, when Horowitz does so to assert that the village is not class-stratified, Baber criticizes him for ignoring village microdynamics. He thus appears to focus his lens differently when it suits his theoretical argument. In addition, his insistent recourse to his empirical data from Morne Vert, which to him demonstrate that the village is class-stratified, leads him to argue that "self-consciousness" of class should not be a criterion of its definition (p. 147). Yet he neglects to address, with this broad, dismissive stroke, why both quantifiable and non-quantifiable aspects of class difference cannot be considered meaningful. This neglect may be in part accounted for by Baber's relentless focus on resolving debates which now seem unnecessarily polarized and stale. This book might have been more richly informed by recent work which integrates the material and non-material aspects of the reproduction of class difference and social meaning, from Gramsci-inspired approaches such as cultural studies.

One also misses a fuller contextualization of Horowitz's work as a record of two particular moments, in the life of Morne Vert and in anthropology. Baber does not acknowledge strongly enough that Horowitz's conclusions may have been influenced by the village's brief but exceptional prosperity during the period of Horowitz's fieldwork. Similarly, by not fully delineating the place of Horowitz's work in 1950s "community studies," and underestimating the influence of this paradigm, Baber at times judges Horowitz too harshly.

Finally, the turgid writing and weak editing (with numerous typographical errors) of this book must be acknowledged.

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*Poverty in Jamaica*. M.G. SMITH. Kingston: Institute of Social and Economic Research, 1989. xxii + 167 pp. (Paper US\$ 12.00)

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The bulk of this book was originally written in 1975 to assess basic needs among Jamaica's impoverished citizens, who comprise the majority of the population. On behalf of the Manley administration, M.G. Smith administered an exploratory survey to yield data for rational and effective development planning. *Poverty in Jamaica* is only a slightly revised version of the report that was written for government officials and politicians and, therefore, was not concerned with elaborate conceptualization and formulation. Emphasis was (and is in the 1989 publication) placed on description and basic extrapolation. The data are compiled and tabulated in 85 tables, and Smith offers a reasonable, straightforward description of what the tables indicate about conditions among the poor. However, Smith focuses on individuals, households, and families as the key units of need, and seemingly resists making inferences that would lead him to the broader configurations of class, power, and economic underdevelopment that condition the surveyed needs. The absence of any discussion on the structure of inequalities is disappointing, especially since Smith has devoted much of his career to the study of social stratification. He himself has stated that

correct conceptions of the structure of [Caribbean] societies are particularly important and necessary to guide the programmes and policies of the movements and governments that struggle with them, remedially or otherwise [...]. The currently confused state of thinking about West Indian social structure identifies its analysis and clarification as the most important immediate task to be undertaken in order that we may advance our understanding of these societies, their current trends, problems and needs. (Smith 1984:13)

Despite Smith's own directive, *Poverty in Jamaica* does little to clarify or explicate the structure of resource distribution and need in Jamaica, which is characterized by one of the world's most inequitable patterns of income distribution (Stone 1980:53; Boyd 1987). Instead, the book meets a more limited objective by providing data that voluntary and government agencies can further interpret and use as a basis for future research, planning, and implementation. While this is an appropriate aim for a report, a book intended to reach a broader audience would have benefited from an analy-

sis more sensitive to historical context. Published more than a decade after the original document was written, the book neglects to relate the objectives, results, and context, of the 1974-75 survey to the prevailing climate in Jamaica during the 1980s, a period marked by austere structural adjustment policies and by a political backlash against the 1970s' experiment in democratic socialism. Possibly in an attempt to remain close to the evidence and to avoid charges of ideological bias (cf. Robotham 1980, 1985; Smith 1983, 1987), Smith chose not to engage wider political and economic questions.

In spite of the absence of broader intellectual and social context, the book is worth reading because of its insights into the problems of survey research and labor force statistics; its concern with both official and folk definitions of need, employment, and work; its attention to informally organized mutual aid networks among the poorest segments of the population; its recognition of gender differentials and the double jeopardy poor women experience; and, finally, its attempt to ground its assessment in a people-centered identification of need rather than in a framework focused on "social problems."

While the survey successfully revealed "the gross magnitude of national need for social assistance of various kinds" (p. 9) among the bottom 85% of the population (p. 22), its original design and sampling procedure (developed by Jamaica's Department of Statistics) were flawed. Hence, the representativeness of the results was compromised. However, problems of validity and reliability were not limited to Smith's project alone. Government labor force statistics "inflate the incidence of employment [...], conceal the volume of underemployment, and [...] understate the degree of unemployment" (p. 41). In contrast, the needs survey yielded data that permitted Smith to differentiate more adequately among salient socioeconomic categories – from regular wage-workers to the never-employed.

The survey demonstrated that the overall circumstances for rural individuals and households were significantly more depressed than those under which urban people lived, and generally women's economic conditions were worse than men's. The unemployed were a sizable proportion of the sample (27.43%), with women bearing the brunt (31.55% as compared to 22.4% among men). Eighty-seven per cent of the respondents earned incomes that were at or below the "poverty wage" of between JA\$ 50 per week for urban areas and JA\$ 30 for rural areas (Stone 1980:51). Nearly 60% earned less than JA\$ 30 per week, and more than 30% earned less than JA\$ 20. The situation was even more desperate for household heads, of whom more than 60% earned less than \$10 weekly. Close to 20% of the households surveyed lacked any employed adult residents.

The survey also revealed that informal exchanges in cash, commodities, services, information, and advice played a significant part meeting needs

unfulfilled by established social service institutions. The majority of aid transactions involved kinspeople circulating gifts or loans of cash. Surprisingly, over four times as many men as women engaged in kinship exchanges. This gap was wider than expected even in light of men's higher level of participation in the market economy. Overall, the highest participation rates involved rural men, followed by urban men, then urban women, and finally rural women, who had the least access to resources.

Smith cogently substantiates the need for more adequate employment opportunities, training programs, low-cost housing, public medical facilities in rural areas, government support for aged and pre-school dependents, and improved access to arable land, credit, and supporting facilities for farming. He also extrapolates the need for literacy programs, family planning schemes, legal aid, and information about available provisions and services. He admits that the 1974-75 survey and his interpretation of its results "invite criticism" (p. 164). However, the study's flaws serve a constructive role in that they point to modifications and refinements that could be made to construct more reliable instruments for planning-related research. In this regard, a qualified reading of this book can offer valuable food for thought.

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*Street foods of Kingston.* DORIAN POWELL, ERNA BRODBER, ELEANOR WINT, & VERSADA CAMPBELL. Mona, Jamaica: Institute of Social and Economic Research, 1990. xii + 125 pp. (Paper US\$ 7.75)

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This modest, informative study of urban roadside food sellers in Kingston was undertaken to provide basic information on the economic and social characteristics of a small-scale entrepreneurial group, as the basis for making policy recommendations to Government. By classifying the foods sold into five categories (e.g., "pre-prepared traditional homemade solids such as fried fish, sandwiches, jerked chicken, cornmeal/sweet potato pudding"; or "natural foods such as fruits, peanuts, and sugar cane"), the project directors provided themselves with a sample basis for more detailed study of fifty vendors. (This number was later reduced to thirty.)

The project directors included two social workers, a historian-novelist, and a nutritionist. The fieldwork, however, was carried out by other persons who, while thanked, are never identified; nor do we learn anything about their age, gender, training, or education. In addition to mapping vendor locations and enumerating foods, fieldworkers visited vendors both at work and at home. Different workers handled the daytime and after-work segments of the research, which may have meant the loss of some materials. Nonetheless, the data contained in the "vendor life" section is interesting and revealing. In addition to specifying their family situations and giving a good sense of their economic levels, this section documents the energy, skill, and hopefulness of the vendors, many of them quite desperately poor, in their spirited dealings with a difficult and even dangerous world. The writers point out that vendors were not enthusiastically cooperative – but this is hardly surprising when one learns of the difficult conditions under which they operate. One wonders whether perceived class differences may also have played a part in limiting the cooperativeness of the retailers. All the more credit, then, to the fieldworkers.

The study concludes with four recommendations (though they might better be called observations): that Government should help to stabilize vendor activity, rather than seek to chase vendors off the streets; provide access to funding for improvement of small enterprise; organize training programs for vendors; and – in view of the low nutritive value of the foods and the unsanitary conditions of their sale – institute training in nutrition and

sanitation. These are all unexceptionable recommendations, but there are probably no grounds at all for expecting Government to respond positively to any of them.

In situating their work in wider contexts, the authors refer to the terminology of the "informal economy," and even refer to comparable studies in Africa and Asia. But only the name "informal economy" is new; and of course Jamaicans have been higglers for centuries. By ignoring the rich past of the local internal market system, the authors slight the remarkable continuity of retailing practices that go back, in the Jamaican case, to long before the end of slavery itself, and that have a special resonance. What is important about these retailers is that they are uneducated and disadvantaged, but economically independent, self-employed entrepreneurs. Unlike the writers, say, or this reviewer, they do not work for Government or for some private university, research body, or other employer, and they have precious little to call their own. Each day, without the slightest help and, often, in the face of official obstructionism, they take their chances with the tiny bit that is theirs, using their energy, brains, and character to stay in business. They come much closer to the "free enterprise" we hear so much about these days than do any of the folks who are telling us about it. Back in 1952, I recall a Jamaican higgler telling me about her friend: "one week she gain, an' one week she lose, but she rather be a higgler an' mek a shillin' than work in somebody's house." By failing to stress this "independentist" aspect of small-scale retailing (and by resorting to the amusing but trivializing cartoon that graces their book's cover), the writers underplay the human, economic, and moral significance of their study.

*Urban poverty in the Caribbean: French Martinique as a social laboratory.*  
MICHEL S. LAGUERRE. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1990. xiv + 181 pp.  
(Cloth US\$ 45.00)

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This book presents the results of a study conducted by the author in 1985-86, in two low-income neighborhoods of Fort-de-France, Martinique. Sainte-Thérèse is a poor section located in the southeast suburbs of the city, and Volga-Plage is a nearby area that has been heavily settled by squatters. The aim of the research was to prove that urban poverty spawns its own devel-

opment; for this, Fort-de-France is seen as providing an extremely rich resource: "Like all the capital cities of the Caribbean, Fort-de-France has its share of poverty" (p. 16).

The reproduction of this urban poverty implies however a reproduction of urban wealth, since the two phenomena coexist through the maintenance of asymmetrical social relations between rich and poor. In other words, Laguerre envisions the reproduction of the parts necessary for the reproduction of the system as a whole. This approach leads him to a consideration of the ecological dimension. The urban poor, he argues, occupy those areas that the dominating class decides to abandon to their use, and thus forms part of the spatial hierarchy of the city. Thus, poverty is likely to continue as long as the relations between poor and dominant sectors remain asymmetrical, with the poor at the bottom of the hierarchy in terms of locality. Furthermore, unlike other classes, the poor lack access to resources and significant social contacts within their own environment.

Other subjects covered in this study are identified as "the urban household as a multi-product firm," "domestic workers," "the grocery store as an exploitation niche," "saving associations," and "immigrant households as overseas subsidiaries." The author's exploration of each of these categories leads him to conclude that they are all "niches" favorable to the reproduction of poverty. Laguerre considers it appropriate to define the urban household as a firm in that it has multiple sources of revenue and, as in a firm, aims at accumulation. It differs from a firm, however, in not seeking a profit, turning its primary attention toward the well-being and happiness of its members. His other three units of analysis – "domestic workers," "the grocery store," and "savings associations" – also reproduce urban poverty, but these depend on the exploitation of individuals within the poor community by another member of this same community.

"Immigrant households" designates the "niche" where poverty is reproduced most sharply because it must deal with factors such as the definition of the immigrant's status, the low opinion held of them by the local population, obligations toward family members left behind in the home country, and financial responsibilities toward recently-arrived relatives and friends, or toward those back home who wish to immigrate.

Laguerre is well justified in describing the current situation in Martinique in terms of the evolution of the condition of domestic workers, the functioning of savings associations (*les sousous*) and grocery stores (*les boutiques*), but his analysis is weakened by a perspective distinctly lacking in optimism. His notion that poverty is always inescapable seems overdrawn. In fact, the situation is quite different, and my own feeling is that what we need are more studies of strategies and programs that allow people to emerge from



poverty. These might include, for example: improvements in living conditions, especially measures to combat problems of sanitation; primary education, possibly even including private schools; increases in sources of revenue; social mechanisms aimed at the struggle against impoverishment; intra-community cooperative efforts working through the *sousous* and informal work exchanges.

As a French *département*, Martinique benefits from many welfare programs designed for low-income groups. If it is true that human dignity requires some means of earning a living through properly compensated labor, it is also true that privileged sectors of the population have a responsibility to show some solidarity with the less well-to-do by helping to raise their standard of living.

Martinique would not seem to be the best testing ground for general theories about urban poverty in the Caribbean. What does a poor person in Vo'a Plage have in common with a poor person in Castries or Roseau? I would underscore, in this regard, the high level of social consciousness in French society.

Moreover, Martinique is a society undergoing dramatic change in the context of its stepped up participation in post-1992 Europe. Whether this is for the better or the worse, it is certain that in many respects life in Martinique bears little resemblance to that in other Caribbean islands.

On the other hand, I found reason to wonder about the more general sociological stance of the book's author, who cites Bourdieu to claim that "The social function of the school system is that of reproduction of class relations" (p. 13). Indeed, the school system would have made an excellent focus of a study of Martiniquan society. But Laguerre does not specify what it means to be poor (or rich) in Martinique, and does not define relations between the two classes except in his discussion of domestic workers.

As for immigrants in Martinique, it is extremely important to distinguish the situations of those who are legal and those who are clandestine. It is equally important to take into account the role of the very powerful unions, such as CGTM, CSTM, and CDMT, which support struggles aimed at upholding workers' rights.

Laguerre's book provides interesting information on certain aspects of Martiniquan society such as the functioning of *boutiques* and *sousous* and relations between employers and employees. But theoretical questions are poorly handled. And it is not clear how such a study could reflect realities in other islands of the Caribbean.